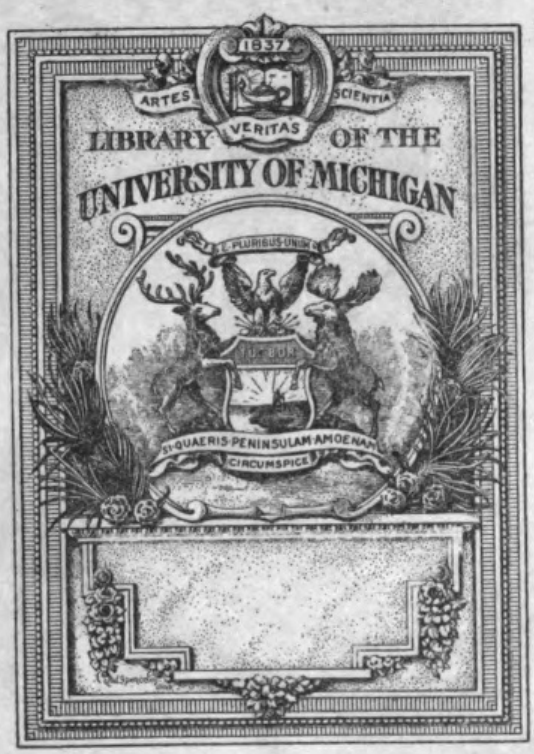


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JULY TO DECEMBER, 1902

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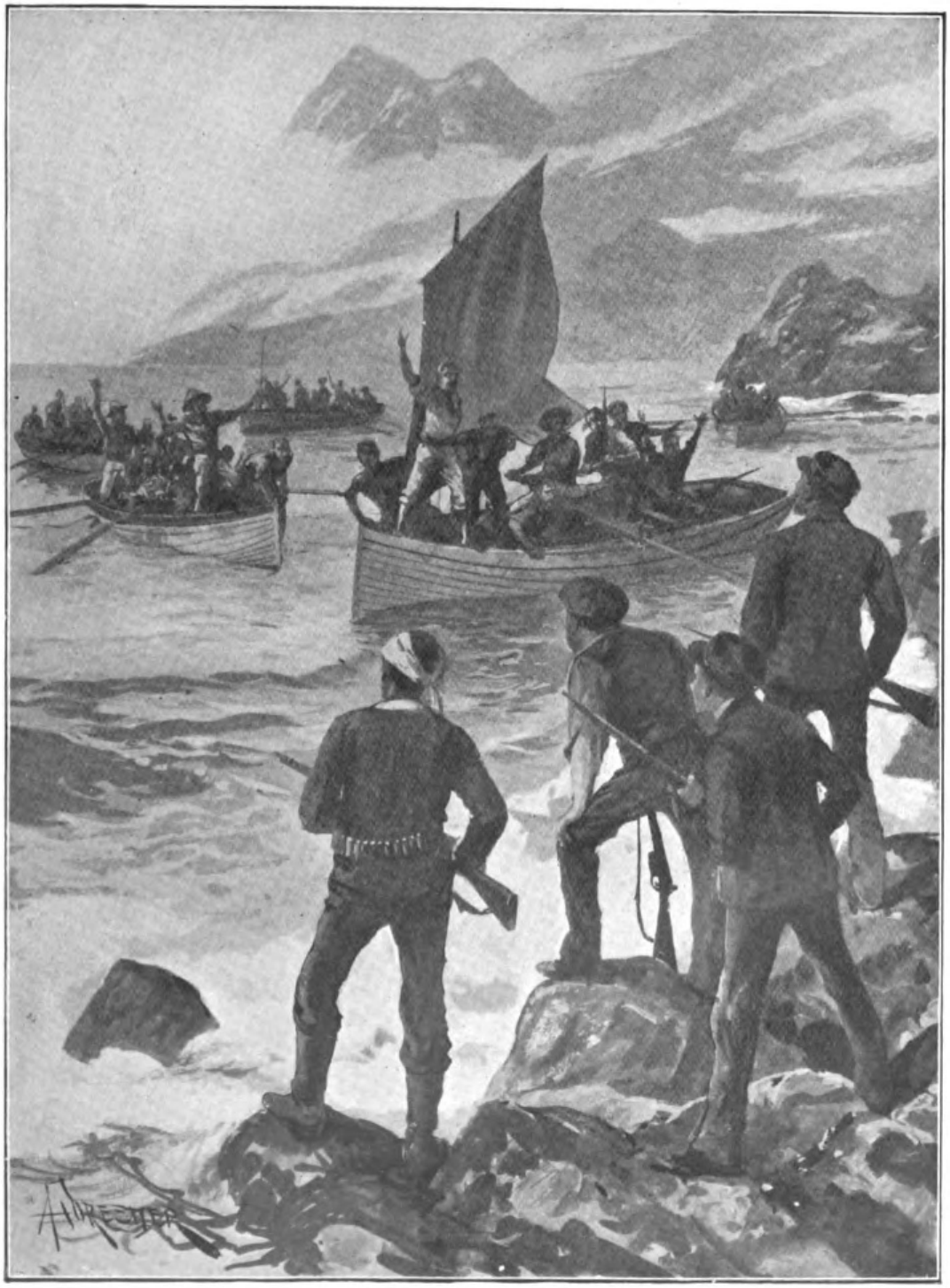
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"WATER!—WATER, MATE, FOR THE LOVE OF HEAVEN!"
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The House Under the Sea.

By Max Pemberton.

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE SECOND ATTACK ON CZERNY'S HOUSE.

THE shot was fired and answered at the lower gate. We had looked for that: for that we had been waiting during the watching hours. They would attack the lesser reef, we said, and our own good men, standing sentinels, would flash the news of it to us, and the gun would do the rest. Dark as it was, the blackest hour the island had given us, nevertheless by daylight we had trained our barrels upon the reef, and now took aim in all confidence. Twice we whistled shrilly to warn our men; twice we heard their answering voices. Then the gun belched forth its hail of shot and the challenge was thrown down.

"Give it to them, Dolly!" I cried, my brain afire at the call of action; "for every honest seaman's sake, give it to them, lad! We'll tell of this to morrow—aye, Dolly, we'll tell a great story yet!"

He answered me with a boy's glad cry; I do believe it was like a game to him.

"Pass here, pass here!" he kept crying; "we have them every time! In with the shot, Seth—in with it! Don't keep them waiting! Oh, captain, what a night!"

The others said nothing; even Peter Bligh's tongue was still in that surpassing moment. The doubt of it defied words. We knew nothing, nor could we do aught but leave our fortune to the darkness of the night. The rogues who fell, the rogues who stood, the boats that came on, the boats that withdrew, of these we were ignorant. All was hidden from our eyes; the veil of the night cloaked from us the work we had done. If men cried in agony, if groans mocked angry boasts, if we heard the splashing of the oars, the hoarse command, the vile blasphemy, the rest was in imagination's keeping. The outposts of Czerny's crew, we said, had tried to rush the gate where our own men watched; but our own were behind the steel doors now and the gun's hail swept the barren rock. The dawn would show us the harvest we had reaped.

Now the volleys rolled their thunder right away to the hills of Ken's Island, and the whistling of the bullets was like the singing of unseen birds above our heads; there were oases of red flame in the waste of blackness; we heard oaths and cries, commands roared hoarsely across the water, voices triumphant and voices in despair; and then came the first great silence. Whatever had befallen on the rock, those who sought to force the lesser gate were, for the moment, driven back. Even little Dolly, mad at the gun like one whom no reason could restrain, heard me at last and obeyed my command.

"Cease firing, lad!" roared I, "cease firing! Would you shoot the sea? Yonder's the captain's whistle. It means that the danger's nearer. Aye, stand by, lads," I said, "and look out for it."

We swung the gun round so that it faced the basin before us, and, rifles ready, we peered again in the lowering darkness. About me now I could hear the deep breathing of my comrades, and see their crouching figures, and say that every nerve was tautened, every faculty awakened. Shielded by the night, those hidden boats were creeping up to us foot by foot. Whatever had been done at the lesser gate had been done as a ruse,

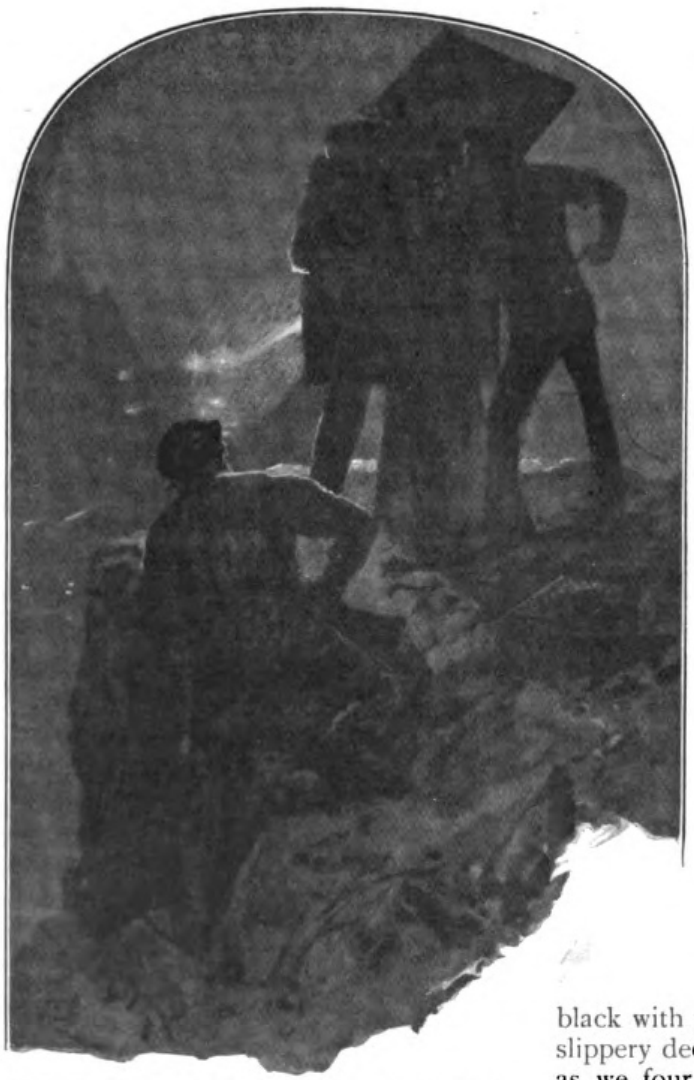
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I did not doubt. Czerny's goal was the greater door we held so desperately; his desire was to win possession of that house wherein lay life and treasure and lasting security.

I counted twenty, no man speaking, and then I raised my voice. Dimly, in the shadows, I made out the shape of a long-boat drifting to the brink; and to Dolly I said:—

"Let go—in Heaven's name, let go, lad!"

He stood to the gun with a cry of defiance and blazed into the darkness. The drifting boat lurched and sagged and turned her beam to the seas. I could distinguish the faces of men, ferocious and threatening, as they peered upward to the rock; I saw other boats looming over the dark water; I heard the ringing command, "In at them! Down with them!" and then, I think, for many minutes together I fired wildly at the figures before me, swung round now to this side, now to that; was unconscious of the bullets splintering the rock or of the lead shower pouring on us. The battle raged; we were at the heart of it. What should a man remember then but those who counted upon him?



"HE STOOD TO THE GUN WITH A CRY OF DEFIANCE AND BLAZED INTO THE DARKNESS."

Now, you have imagined this picture, and you seem to stand with me upon that spit of rock, that defiant crag in the great Pacific Ocean, with the darkness of heaven above and the darkness of the sea below, with the belching guns and the spitting rifles, the yells of agony and the crouching figures, the hearts beating high and the sweating faces; and just as the outcome was hidden from me and I knew not from minute to minute whether it were life or death to us, so will you share the meaning of that suspense and all the terror of it. From every side now the rain of shot was poured in upon us, the unceasing torrent came; above, below, ringing upon the iron shield, scattering deadly fragments, ploughing the waters, it fell like a wave impotent, a broken sea whose spindrift even could not harm us. For a good ring of steel fenced us about; we held the turret, and we laughed at the madness below.

"Round with the gun!" I would cry, again and again; "round with her, Dolly. Let them have it everywhere. No favours this night, my lad; full measure and overflowing—let them have it, for Miss Ruth's sake!"

His joyous "Aye, aye, sir!" was a thing to hear. No sailor of the old time, black with powder, mad on a slippery deck, fought, I swear, as we four in that shelter of the turret. Clear as in the sun's day were the waves about us while the crimson flame leaped out. Crouched all together, the sweat upon our foreheads, smoke in our eyes, the wild delight of it quickening us, we blazed at the enemy unseen; we said that right was with us.

There were, so far as I could make out, six boats set to the attack upon the great gate, and seventy or eighty men manning them. Acting together on such a plan as a master-mind had laid down for them, they

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tried to rush the rock from four points of the compass, trusting, it may be, that one boat, at least, would land its crew upon the plateau. And in this they were successful. Pour shot upon them as we might, search every quarter with the flying shells, nevertheless one boat touched the rock in spite of us, one crew leaped up in frenzy toward the turret. So sudden it was, so unlooked for, that great demoniacal figures seemed upon us even while we said that the seas were clear. Whirling their knives, yelling one to the other, some slipping on the slimy weed, others, more sure in foothold, making for the turret's height, the mutineers fell upon us like a hurricane and so beat us down that my heart sank away from me, and I said that the house was lost and little Ruth Bellenden their prey at last.

"Stand by the gun—by the gun to the last, if you love your life!" I cried to Dolly Venn. "Do you, Peter, old comrade, follow me; I am going to clear the rock. You will help me to do that, Peter?"

"Help you, captain! Aye," roared he, "if it was the ould divil himself in a travelling caravan, I'd help you!"

He swung his rifle by the barrel as he spoke the words and, bringing it down crash, he cleaved the skull of a great ruffian whose face was already glowering down from the turret's rim. Nothing, I swear, in all that night was more wonderful than the *sang froid* of this great Irishman (as he would call himself in fighting moods) or the merry words which he could find for us even then in the very crisis of it, when hope seemed gone and the worst upon us. For Peter knew well what I was about when I leapt from the turret and charged down upon the mutineers. A dozen men, perchance, had gained foothold on the rock. We must drive them back, he said; stand face to face with them, let the odds be what they might.

"Good luck to my arm this hour and light for the bald places!" cries he, leaping to the ground and whirling his musket like a demon. Seth Barker, do not doubt, was on his heels—trust the carpenter to be where danger was! I could hear him grunting even above that awful din. He fought like ten, and wherever he swung his musket there he left death behind him.

So follow us as we leap from the turret, and hurl ourselves upon that astonished crew. Black as the place was, tremulous the light, nevertheless the cabined space, the open plateau, was our salvation. I saw figures before me; faces seemed to look into my own; and as a battle-axe of old time, so my rifle's butt would fall upon them. Heaven knows I had the strength of three and I used it with three's agility, now shooting them down, now hitting wildly, thrust here, thrust there, bullets singing about my ears, haunting cries everywhere. Aye, how they went under! What music it was, those crashing blows upon head and breast, the loud report, the gurgling death-rattle, the body thrown into the sea, the pitiful screams for mercy! And yet the greater wonder, perhaps, that we lived to tell of it. Twelve against three; yet a craven twelve, remember, who feared to die and yet must fight to live! And to nerve our arms a woman's honour, and, to guide us aright, the watchword: "Home!"

I fought my way to the water's edge, and then turned round to see what the others were doing. There were two upon Peter Bligh at that moment, but one fell headlong as I took a step toward them; and the other's driving-knife fell on empty air, and the man himself, struck full between the eyes, rolled dead into the lapping sea.

"Well done, Peter, well done!" I cried, wildly; and then, as though it were an answer to my boasts, something fell upon my shoulder like a great weight dropped from above, and I went down headlong upon the rock. Turning as I fell, I clutched a human throat, and, closing my fingers upon it, he and I, the man out of the darkness and the fool who had forgotten his eyes, went reeling over and over like wild beasts that seek a hold and would tear and bite when the moment comes. Aye, how I held him, how near his eyes seemed to mine, what gasping sounds he uttered, how his feet fought for foothold on the rock, how his hand felt for the knife at his girdle! And I had him always, had him surely; and seeking to force himself upward, the slippery rock gave him no foothold, and he slipped at last from my very fingers, and some great fish, hidden from me, drew him down to the water and I saw the waves close above his mouth. Henceforth there were but three men left at the gate of Czerny's house. They were three who, even at that time, could thank God because the peril was turned.

We beat the twelve off, as I have told you, and for an hour at least no fresh attack was made on the rock. The sharpest eye now could not detect boats in the darkness; the sharpest ear could not distinguish the

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muffled splash of oars. We lay all together in the turret, and very methodically, as seamen will, we stanched our wounds and asked, "What next?" That we had some hurt of such an affray goes without saying. My own shoulder was bruised and aching; the blood still trickled down Peter Bligh's honest face from the knife-wound that had gashed his forehead; Seth Barker pressed his hand to a jagged side and said that it was nothing. But for these scratches we cared little, and when our comrades hailed us from the lesser gate, their "All's well!" made us glad men indeed. In spite of it all, one of us, at least, I witness, could tell himself, "It is possible — by Heaven, it is possible—that we shall see the day!" That we had beaten off the first attack was not to be doubted. Wherever the mutineers had gone to, they no longer rowed in the loom of the gate. And yet I knew that the time must be short; day would not serve them nor the morning light. The dark must decide it.



"THE SLIPPERY ROCK GAVE HIM NO FOOTHOLD."

"They will come again, Peter, and it will be before the dawn," said I, when one thing and another had been mentioned and no word of their misfortune. "It's beyond expectation to suppose anything else. If this house is to be taken, they must take it in the dark. And more than that, lads," said I, "it was a foolish thing for us to go among them as we did and to fight it out down yonder. We are safer in the turret—safer, by a long way!"

"I thought so all the time, sir," answered Dolly Venn, wisely. "They can never get below if you cover the door; and I can keep the sea. It's lucky Czerny loop-holed this place, anyway. If ever I meet him, I shall quote poetry: 'He nursed the pinion which impelled the steel.' It would about make him mad, captain!"

"Aye," says Peter Bligh, "poetry is well enough, as my poor old father used to say; but poetry never reefed a to'gallan' sail in a hurricane and isn't going to begin this night. It's thick heads you need, lad, and good, sound sense inside of 'em! As for what the captain says, I do hold it, truly. But, Lord! I'm like a boy at a fair when the crowns are cracking, and angels themselves wouldn't keep me back."

"You'd affright them, Mister Bligh," puts in Seth Barker, "you'd affright them—asking your pardon — with your land-gwich!"

"What!" cries Peter, as though in amazement; "did I say things that oughtn't to be said? Well, you surprise me, Barker, you do surprise me!"

Well, I was glad to hear them talk like this, for jest is better than the coward's "if"; and men who can face death with a laugh will win life before your craven any day. But for the prone figures on the rock, looking up with their sightless eyes, or huddled in cleft and cranny—but for them, I say, and distant voices on the sea, and the black shape of Ken's Island, we four might have been merry comrades in a ship's cabin, smoking a pipe in the morning watch and looking gladly for dawn and a welcome shore. That this content could long endure was, beyond all question, impossible. Never-

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theless, when next we started up and gripped our rifles and cried "Stand by!" it was not any alarm from the sea that brought us to our feet, but a sudden shout from the house below, a rifle-shot echoing in the depths, a woman's voice, and then a man's rejoinder; a figure appearing without any warning at the stairs-head, the figure of a huge man, vast and hulking, with long yellow hair, and fists clenched and arms outstretched—a man who took one scared look round him and then leaped wildly into the sea. Now this, you may imagine, was the most surprising event of all that eventful night. So quickly did it come upon us, so little did we look for it, that when Kess Denton, the yellow man, stood at the open gate and uttered a loud and piercing yell of defiance, not one among us could lift a rifle, not one thought of plan or action. There the fellow was, laughing like a maniac. Why he came, whence he came, no man could tell. But he leaped into the sea and the night engulfed him, and only his mocking laugh told us that he lived.

"Kess Denton!" cried I, my head dazed and my words coming in a torrent; "Kess Denton. Then there's mischief below, lads—mischief, I swear!"

Clair-de-Lune answered me—old Clair-de-Lune, standing in a blaze of light; for they had switched on the lamps below, and the vein of the reef stood out suddenly like some silver monster breathing on the surface of the sea. Clair-de-Lune answered me, I say, and his words were the most terrible I had heard since first I came to Ken's Island.

"The water is in!" he cried, "the water is in the house!"

I saw it as in a flash. This man we had neglected to hunt from the caverns below, striking at us in the supreme moment, had opened trap or window and let the sea pour in the labyrinth below. The water was flooding Czerny's house.

"Now," I cried, "you don't mean that, Clair-de-Lune? Then what of the men in the engine-room? How will it fare with Captain Nepeen?"

Doctor Gray stood behind the old Frenchman, and, limping up to my side, he leaned against the rock and began to speak of it very coolly.

"The water is in," he said, "but it will not flood the higher rooms, for they are above sea-level. We are saving what provisions we can, and the men below are all right. As for Nepeen, we must get him off in a boat somehow. It is the water I am thinking of, captain; what are we going to do for water?"

I sat upon the rock at his side and buried my face in my hands. All that terrible day seemed to culminate in this overwhelming misfortune. Driven on the one hand by the sea, on the other by these figures of the darkness, doomed, it might be, to hunger and thirst on that desolate rock, four good comrades cut off from us by the sea's intervening, the very shadows full of dangers, what hope had we, what hope of that brave promise spoken to little Ruth but three short hours ago?

"Doctor," I said at last, "if we are not at the bottom of it now, we never shall be. But we are men, and we will act as men should. Let the women stand together in the great hall until the sea drives them out. If water is our need, I am ashore to Ken's Island to-morrow to get it. As for Nepeen, we have a boat and we have hands to man it; we'll fetch Captain Nepeen, doctor," said I.

He nodded his head and appeared to be thinking deeply. Old Clair-de-Lune was the next to utter a sensible thing.

"The man flood the house," said he, "but no sure he get to ship. If he drown, Czerny know nothing. I say turn out the lamp—wait!"

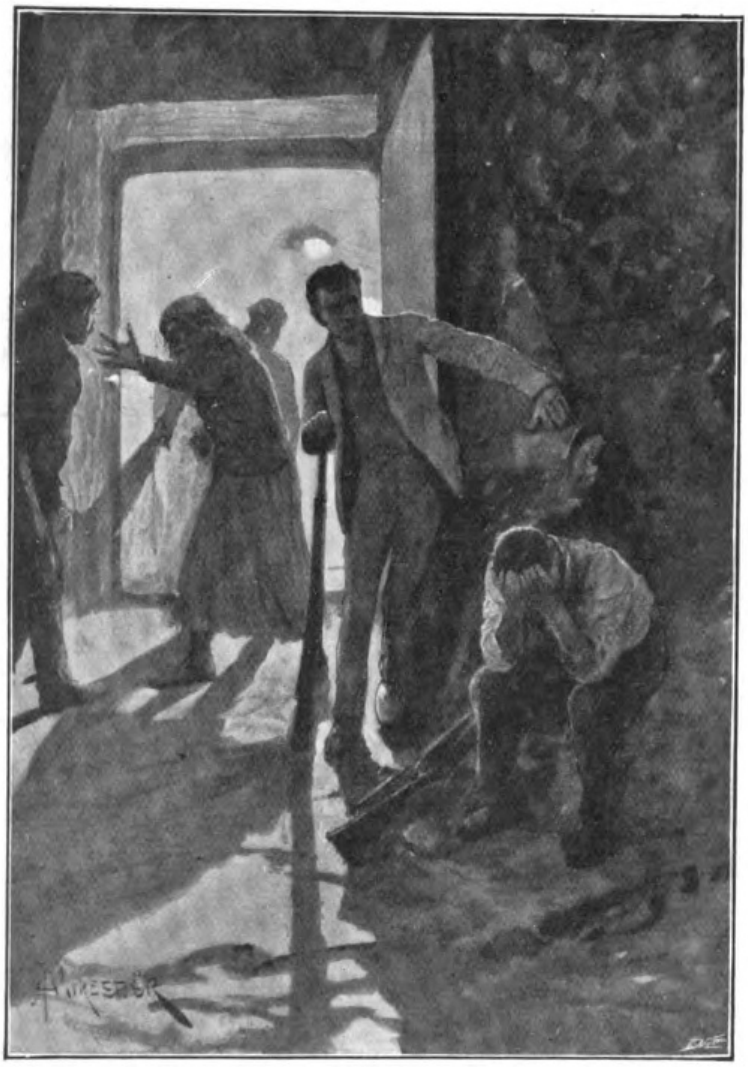
"As true a word as the night has spoken," said I; "if Kess Denton does not reach the boats, they won't hear the story. We'll keep it close enough, lads, and Captain Nepeen will learn it soon enough. Do you whistle, Dolly, and get an answer. I hope sincerely it is all well with them still."

He whistled across the sea, and after a long minute of waiting a distant voice cried, "All's well!" For the hour at least our comrades were safe. Should we say the same of them when daylight came?

The dark fell with greater intensity as the dawn drew near. I thought that it typified our own black hour, when it seemed that fate had nothing left for us but a grave beneath the seas or the eternal sleep on the island shore.

Another hour passed, and the dawn was nearer. I did not know then (though I know now) what kept Czerny's crew in the shadows, or why we heard nothing of them. Once, indeed, in the far distance where the yacht lay anchored, gun-shots were fired, and were answered from some boat lying southward by the island; but no other message of the night was vouchsafed to us,

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"I SAT UPON THE ROCK AT HIS SIDE AND BURIED MY FACE IN MY HANDS."

no other omen to be heard. In the gloom of the darkened house women watched, men kept the vigil and prayed for the day. Would the light never come; would that breaking East never speed its joyous day? Ah! who could tell? Who, in the agony of waiting, ever thinks aright or draws the truthful picture?

There was no new attack, I say, nor any sure news from the caverns below. From time to time men went to the stairs-head and watched the seas washing green and slimy in the corridors, or spoke of them beating upon the very steps of the great hall and threatening to rise up and up until they engulfed us all and conquered even the citadel we held. Nevertheless, iron gates held them back. Not vainly had Czerny's master-mind foreseen such a misfortune as this. Those tremendous doors which divided the upper house from its fellow were stronger than any sluice-gates, more sure against the water's advance. We held the upper house; it was ours while we could breathe in it or find life's sustenance there.

Now, I saw Miss Ruth in the hour of dawn and she stood with us for a little while at the open gate and there spoke so brightly of to-morrow, so lightly of this hour, that she helped us to forget, and made men of us once more.

"They will not come again to-night, Jasper," she said; "I feel, I know it! Why should they wait? Something has happened, and something spells 'Good luck.' Oh, yes, I have seen that for the last hour. Things must be worse before they mend, and they are mending now. The gale will come at dawn and we shall all go ashore, you and I together, Jasper!"

"Miss Ruth," said I, "that would be the happiest day in all my life. You bring the dawn always, wherever you go, the good sunlight and God's blue sky! It has been day for me while I heard your voice and said that I might serve you!"

She would not answer me; but, as though to give my words their meaning, we had watched but a little while longer on the rock when suddenly out of the East the grey light winged over to us, and, spreading its wonder-rays upon the seas, it rolled the black veil back and showed us height and valley, sea and land, the white-capped breakers and the dim heavens beyond them. Many a dawn have I watched and waited for on the heart of the desolate sea, but never one which carried to me such a message as then it spake, the joy of action and release, the light of life and hope, the clarion call, uplifting, awakening! For I knew that in day our salvation lay, and that the terrible night was for ever passed; and every faculty being quickened, the mind alert, the eyes no longer veiled, I stretched out my arms to the sun and said, "Thank God!"

It was day, and the fresh sea answered its appeal. Coming quickly as day will in the

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great Pacific, we had scarce seen that vast rim of the East lift itself above the sparkling water when all the scene was opened to us, the picture of boats and water and wave-washed reef made clear as in some scene of stageland. As with one tongue, realizing a mighty truth, we cried, "The ship is gone; the ship has sailed!"

It was true, all true. Where at sundown there had been a yacht anchored in the offing, now at daybreak no yacht was to be seen. Darkness, which had been the ally of Czerny's men, had helped the man himself to flee from them to an unknown haven where their vengeance should not reach him. By night had he fled, and by day would he mock these, his creatures. Drifting there in the open boats, the rising seas beginning to wash in upon them, hunger and thirst their portion, the rebels were at no pains to hide their secret from us.

We knew that they had been called back by these overwhelming tidings of the master-trick, and we asked what heart they would have to sell their lives for the man who betrayed them?

Would they not look to us for the satisfaction the chief rogue denied to them? We, as they, were left helpless in that woeful place. Before us, as before them, lay the peril of hunger and of thirst, the death-sleep or the greater mercy. And who should ask them to accept it without a last supreme attempt, a final assault, which should mend all or end all? Driven to the last point, to the last point would they go to grasp that foothold of the seas, and to drive us from the rock whereon life might yet be had.

"Lads," I said, "the story is there as the man has written it. We have no quarrel with yon poor creatures nor they with us; but they will find one. We cannot help them; they cannot help us. We'll wait for the end—just wait for it."

I spoke with a confidence which time did not justify. Just as the dawn had put new life into us, so it had steeled the hearts of this derelict crew and nerved it for any desperate act. For long we watched the rogues rowing hither, thither; now in the island's shadows, now coming toward us, but never once raising a rifle or uttering a threat. In the end they came all together, waving a sail upon a pole; and while they appeared to row for the lesser gate they accompanied the act with soft words and a protest of their honesty.

"'Tis after a truce they are," says Peter Bligh, presently, "and that's a poor thing, anyway. My poor father used to say, 'Knock 'em on the head first and sign the papers afterwards.' He was a kind-hearted gentleman, and did a lot of good in the world!"

"He must have done, Peter," said I; "he must have done a power of good, hearing the little you say about him. 'Tis a pity the old gentleman isn't here this day to preach his kindness to yonder rogues. They look in need of a friendly hand; indeed, they do."

Well, the laugh was turned on Peter; but, as a matter of fact, he spoke sense, and I understood as well as he did the risk of parley with the wreckers, even though they did not seem to have any fight left in them—a fact which old Clair-de-Lune was the first to observe.

"They not fire gun this morning," says the old man. "All starve, hungry. Czerny gone. What for they fight? They no stomach left."

"Meaning they've no heart in them," puts in Doctor Gray, at his side. "Aye, that's true, and a bit of human nature, too. You cannot fight every day any more than you can make love every day. It comes and goes like a fever. They had their square meal last night, and they are not taking any this morning. I should not be afraid of them if I were you, captain."

"I never was," said I, bluntly; "I never was, doctor. There's not enough on my conscience for that. But I do believe you speak truly. Making love is more in their line this watch. Ask Dolly Venn there. From what I saw between him and little Rosamunda down below, he's an authority on that point. Eh, Dolly, lad," said I to him, "you could make love every day, couldn't you?"

The lad flushed all over his face at the charge, and Peter Bligh, he said something about "Love one another" being in the Bible, "which must mean many of 'em, and not one in particular," says he. And what with the laugh and the jest, and the new confidence which the sight of those poor driven souls put into us, we came all together to the sea's edge, and, scarcely cocking a rifle at them, we hailed the long-boats and got their story.

"Ahoy, there! And what port d'you think you're making for?" cries Peter Bligh, in a voice that might have split the waters.

They replied to him, standing up in the boat and stretching out their sunburnt, hairy arms to us:—

"Water!—water, mate, for the love of Heaven!"

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"And how do you know," cries Peter back to them, "how do you know that we've water for ourselves?"

"Why, Barebones saw to that," says one of them, no doubt meaning Czerny thereby; "Barebones saw to that, though precious little of it the lubber drank!"

"He's off, is Barebones," says another; "oh, trust Barebones! Bones-and-Biscuits puts to sea last night, 'cause he's a duty to perform in 'Frisco, he 'as. Trust Bones-and-Biscuits to turn up righteous when the trumpet blows!"

And another, said he:—

"I wish I had his black head under my boot this minute! My mouth's all sand and my throat is stuck! Aye, mates," says he, "you'll moisten my poor tongue—same as is wrote in the Scriptures!"

There were other entreaties; some of them spoke to us in French, the most part in German. Of the boats that were left, two had rowed away for the lesser gate, but five drifted about our rock and drew so close that we could have tossed a biscuit to them. Never have I seen a crowd of faces more repulsive, or jowls so repellent. Iron-limbed men, fat Germans, sleek Frenchmen, Greeks, niggers, some armed with rifles, some with fearsome knives, they squatted all together in the open boats and roared together for pity and release. Then, for the first time, I was able to see how cruelly Czerny's gun had dealt with them in the darkness of the night. It was horrible to see the mangled limbs, the open wounds, the matted hair, the gaping faces of these creatures of a desperado's mad ambition. The boats themselves were splintered and hacked as though heavy hatchets had beaten them. I could wonder no longer that they called the truce; and yet, knowing why they called it, what was I to do? Let them set foot on the plateau, and we, but a handful at the best, might be swept into the sea like flies from a wall. I say that I was at my wits' end. Every merciful instinct urged me to give them water; every prudent voice cried, "Beat them off."

"If there's fight in that lot, I'm as black as yonder nigger!" said Peter Bligh, when he had looked at them a little while, very contemptuously. "Not a kick to-day among the lot of them, by Jericho. But you cannot give them water, captain," he goes on, "for you've little to give."

Clair-de-Lune, thinking deeper, was, nevertheless, for a stern refusal.

"Keep them off, captain, that's my advice," says he. "They very desperate, dangerous men. They drink water, then cut throat. Make ear deaf and say cistern all empty. They think you die, and they wait; but come aboard—no, not at all!"

Now, I knew that this was reason, and when Doctor Gray and Captain Nepeen added their words to the Frenchman's I stepped down to the water's edge and made my answer.

"I'll give you water willingly, men, if you'll show me where it is to be found," said I; "but we cannot give what we haven't got, and that's common sense! We're dry here, and if it's bad luck for one it's bad luck for all. The glass says rain," I went on; "we'll wait for it together and have done with all this nonsense."

They heard me to the end; but ignorant, perhaps, of my meaning they continued to whine, "Water, water," and when I repeated that we had no water, one of them, leaping up in the boat, fired his rifle point-blank at Captain Nepeen, who fell without a word stone-dead at my side.

"Good heavens!" said I, "they've shot the captain dead."

The suddenness of it was awful; just a gun flashing, a gasping cry, an honest man leaping up and falling lifeless. And then something that would never move or speak again. The crews themselves, I do believe, were as dazed by it as we were. They could have shot us, I witness, where we stood, every man of us, but, in God's mercy, they never thought of that; and turning on their own man they tore the rifle from his hand and, striking him down with a musket, they sent him headlong into the sea.

"Witness we've no part in it!" they roared. "Jake Bilbow did it, and he was always a bad 'un! You won't charge fifty with one man's deed! Down under with the arms, mates—we've no need of 'em!"

Well, we heard them in amazement. Not a man had moved among us; the body was untouched at our feet. From the boats themselves ruffians were casting their rifles pell-mell into the sea. Never at the wildest hazard would I have named this for the end of it. They cast their rifles into the sea and rowed unarmed about us. To the end of it, I think, they feared the gun with a fear that was nameless and lasting, nor did they know that the turret was empty—how should they?

It was a swift change; to me it seemed as though the day had conjured up this wonder. None the less, the perplexity of it remained, nor could I choose a course even under these

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new circumstances. Of water I had none to give; our own condition, indeed, was little better than that of these unhappy creatures in the boats about me. The sea flooded the house below us; the great engine no longer throbbed; our women were huddled together at the stairs-head, seeking air and light; the fog loomed heavy on Ken's Island; no ship's sail brought hope to our horizon. What should I say, then, to the mutineers, how answer them? I could but protest: "We are as you; we must face it together."

Now, I have told you that both the greater and the lesser gate of Czerny's house were hewn in the pinnacles of rock rising up above the highest tides, and offering there a foothold and an anchorage; but you must not think that these were the only caps of the reef which thrust themselves out to the sea. For there were others, rounded domes of tide-washed rock, treacherous ledges, little craggy steeples, sloping shelves, which low water gave up to the sun and where a man might walk dry-shod. To such strange places the long-boats turned when we would have none of them. Convinced, maybe, that our own case was no better than theirs, the men, in desperation, and cramped with long confinement in the boats, now pushed their bows into the swirling waters; and following each other, as sheep will follow a leader, they climbed out upon the barren rocks and lay there in a state of dejection defying words. Nor had we any heart to turn upon them and drive them off. Little did the new day we desired so ardently bring to us. The sky, gloomy above the blackening, angry seas, was like a mock upon our bravest hopes. Let a few hours pass and the night would come again. This was but an interlude in which man could ask of man, "What next?" We feared to speak to the women lest they should know the truth.

The men crawled upon the sea-washed rocks, I say, and there the judgment of God came upon them. So awful was the scene my eyes were soon to behold that I take up my pen with hesitation even now to write of it; and as I write some figure of the shadows comes before me and seems to say, "You cannot speak of it! It is of the past, forgotten!" And, certainly, if I could make it clear to you how Czerny's men were for ever driven off from the gate of the house that Czerny built, if I could make it clear to you and leave the thing untold, that would I



"THE WHOLE WATER ABOUT THE REEF WAS NOW ALIVE."

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do right gladly. But the end was not of my seeking; in all honesty I can say that if it had been in my power I would have helped those wretched creatures, have dealt out pity to them and carried them to the shore; but it was written otherwise; a higher Power decreed it; we could but stand, trembling and helpless, before that enthralling justice.

They climbed on the rocks, forty or fifty of them, maybe, and lying in all attitudes, some stretched out full length, some with their arms in the flowing tide, some huddled close as though for warmth, they appeared to surrender themselves to the inevitable and to accept the worst; when, rising up out of the near sea, the first octopus showed himself, and a great tentacle, sliding over the rock, drew one of the mutineers screaming to the depths. Thereafter, in an instant, the whole terror was upon them. Leaping up together, they uttered piercing cries, turned upon each other in their agony, hurled themselves into the sea to reach the boats again. Ah! how few of them touched the befriending prows! The whole water about the reef was now alive with the devilish creatures; a hundred arms, crushing, sucking, swept the unsheltered rocks and drew the victims down. So near were they, some of them, that I could see their staring eyes and distorted limbs as, in the fishes' embracing grip, they were drawn under to the gaping mouths, or pressed close to that jellied mass which must devour them. The sea itself heaved and splashed as though to be the moving witness of that horrible attack; foam rushed up to our feet; a blinding spray was in the air; eyes protruded even in the green water; great shapes wormed and twisted, rending one another, covering the whole reef with their filthy slime, sending blinding fountains to the high pinnacles, or sinking down when their prey was taken to the black depths where no eye could follow them. What sounds of pain, what resounding screams, rent the air in those fearful minutes! I draw the veil upon it. For all the gold that the sea washes to-day in Czerny's house, I could not look upon such a picture again. For death can be a gentle thing; but there is a death no man may speak of.

At twelve o'clock the clouds broke and the rain began to fall upon a rising sea. The vapours still lay thick upon Ken's Island, but the wind was driving them, and they rolled away in misty clouds westward to the dark horizon.

I went below to little Ruth, and in broken words I told her all my story.

"Little Ruth, the night is passed, the day is breaking! Ah, little Ruth!"

She fell into my arms, sobbing. The sleep-time was past, indeed; the hour of our deliverance at hand.

CHAPTER XXV.

IN WHICH THE SUN-TIME COMES AGAIN.

I HAVE told you the story of Ken's Island, but there are some things you will need to know, and of these I will now make mention. Let me speak of them in order as they befell.

And first I should record that we found the body of Edmond Czerny, cold and dead, by that pool in the woods where so many have slept the dreadful sleep. Clair-de-Lune stumbled upon it as we went joyously through the sunny thickets and, halting abruptly, his startled cry drew me to the place. And then I saw the thing, and knew that here was God's justice written in words no man might mistake.

For a long time we rested there, looking down upon that grim figure in its bed of leaves, and watching the open eyes seeking that bright heaven whose warmth they never would feel again. As in life, so in death, the handsome face carried the brand of the evil done, and spoke of the ungoverned passions which had wrecked so wonderful a genius. There have been few such men as Edmond Czerny since the world began; there will be few while the world endures. Greatly daring, a man of boundless ambitions, the moral nature obliterated, the greed of money becoming, in the end, like some burning disease, this man, I said, might have achieved much if the will had bent to humanity's laws. And now he had reaped as he sowed. The cloak that covered him was the cloak of the Hungarian regiment whose code of honour drove him out of Europe. The diamond ring upon the finger was the very ring that little Ruth had given him on their wedding-day. The agony he had suffered was such as many a good seaman had endured since the wreckers came to Ken's Island. And now the story was told: the man was dead.

"It must have been last night," I said, at length, to Clair-de-Lune. "His own men put him ashore and seized the ship. Fortune has strange chances, but who would have named such a chance as this? The rogues turned upon him at last, you can't doubt it.

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And he died in his sleep—a merciful death."

The old man shook his head very solemnly.

"I know not," said he, slowly; "remember how rare that the island give mercy! We will not ask how he died, captain. I see something, but I forget it. Let us leave him to the night."

He began to cover the body with branches and boughs; and anon, marking the place, that we might return to it to-morrow, we went on again through the woods, as men in a reverie. Our schemes and plans, our hopes and fears, the terrible hours, the unforgotten days, aye, if we could have seen that the end of them would have been this!—the gift of the verdurous island, and the ripe green pastures, and the woods awakening and all the glory of the sun-time reborn! For so the shadow was lifted from us that for a little while our eyes could not see the light; and, unbelieving, we asked, "Is this the truth?"



"WE FOUND THE BODY OF EDMOND CZEKNY, COLD AND DEAD."

I did not tell little Ruth the story of the woods; but there were whispered words and looks aside, and she was clever enough to understand them. Before the day was out I think she knew; but she would not speak of it, nor would I. For why should we call false sorrow upon that bright hour? Was not the world before us, the awakening glory of Ken's Island at our feet? Just as in the dark days all Nature had withered and bent before the death-giving vapours, so now did Nature answer the sun's appeal; and every freshet bubbling over, every wood alive with the music of the birds, the meadows green and golden, the hills all capped with their summer glory, she proclaimed the reign of Nature's God. No sight more splendid ever greeted the eyes of shipwrecked men or welcomed them to a generous shore. Hand in hand with little Ruth I passed from thicket to thicket of the woods, and seemed to stand in Paradise itself! And she—ah, who shall read a woman's thoughts at such an hour as that? Let me be content to see her as she was: her face grown girlish in that great release, her eyes sparkling in a new joy of being, her step so light that no blade of grass could have been bruised thereby. Let me hear her voice again while she lifts her face to mine and asks me that question which even now I hear sometimes:—

"Jasper, Jasper! is it real? How can I believe it, Jasper? Shall we see our home again—you and I? Oh, tell me that it is true, Jasper—say it often, often, or I shall forget!"

We were in a high place of the woods just then, and we stood to look down upon the lower valley where the rocks showed their rare green mosses, and every crag lifted strange flowers to the sun, and little rivulets ran down with bubbling sounds. Away on the open veldt the doll-like houses were to be seen, and the ashes of her bungalow. And there, I say, all the scene enchanting me, and the memory of the bygone days blotted from my mind, and no future to be thought of but that which should give me for ever the right

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to befriend this little figure of my dreams, I said:—

"It is true, little Ruth—God knows how true—that a man loves you with all his heart, and he has loved you all through these weary months. Just a simple fellow he is, with no fine ways and small knowledge of the world; but he waits for you to tell him that you will lift him up and make him worthy——"

She silenced me with a quick, glad cry, and, winding both her arms about my neck, she hid her face from me.

We were picked up by the American warship *Hatteras* ten days after the sleep-time passed. I left the island as I found it — its secrets hidden, its mysteries unfathomed. What vapour rises up there—whether it be, as Doctor Gray would have it, from the marshy bog of decaying vegetation, which breathes fever to the south; whether it be this marsh fog steaming up when the plants die down; or whether it be a subtler cloud given out by the very earth itself — this question, I say, let the



"SHE SILENCED ME WITH A QUICK, GLAD CRY."

"My friend! Jasper, dear Jasper, you shall not say that! Ah, were you so blind that you have not known it from the first?"

Her words were like the echo of some sweet music in my ears. Little Ruth, my beloved, had called me "friend." To my life's end would I claim that name most precious.

learned dispute. I have done with it for ever; and never, to my life's end, shall I see its heights and its valleys again. The world calls me; I go to my home. Ruth, little Ruth, whom I have loved, is at my side. For us it shall be sun-time always: the night and the dreadful sleep are no more.

THE END.

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Calvé: Artist and Woman.

By Kathleen Schlesinger.

"*The perfection of art is to conceal art.*"—Quintilian.

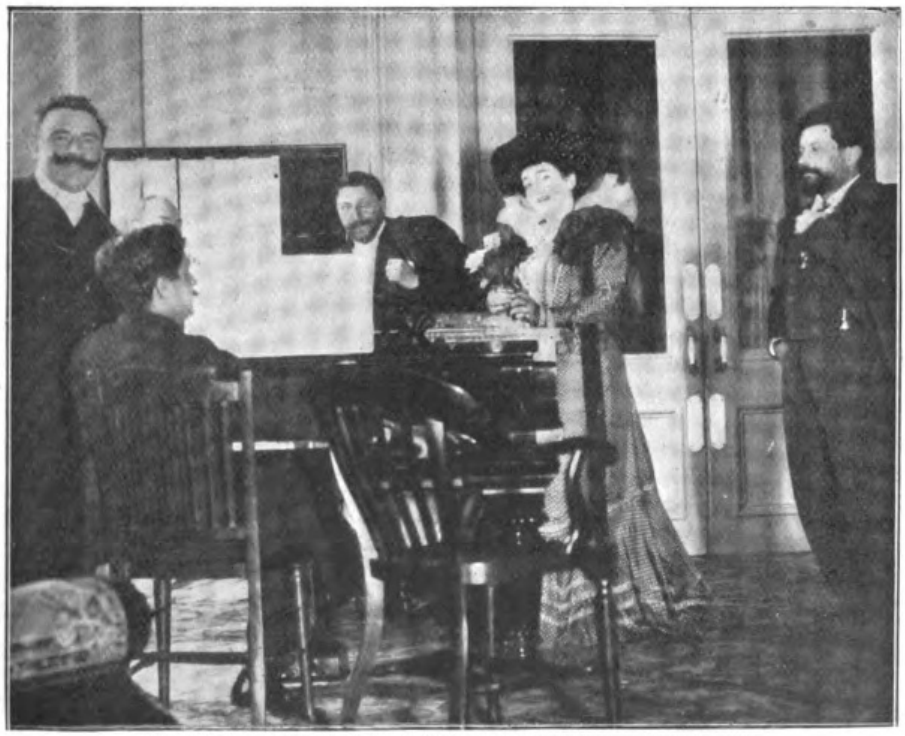
CHIEF among the enjoyments which Covent Garden afforded me last season was the opportunity of seeing Calvé in an entirely new light: Calvé at work on a new impersonation.

The rôle of Messaline was new to her, and her London admirers in front of the curtain thus had the delight of witnessing Calvé under the influence of a fresh conception, oblivious of all else, living only in the new world created by her art.

About M. de Lara's opera there was a diversity of opinion, but Calvé was supreme. To watch this incomparable artist at work is a revelation. Before she learns a note of the music of a new part Calvé studies the character thoroughly from every point of view, assiduously reading any books that can help her, until she has identified herself with her heroine; then, while she is mastering the technical part, the impersonation grows upon her—first a broad outline and later the details. She had reached this stage when the first concerted rehearsal took place in the *foyer* at Covent Garden; all the principals were present, and M. Flon, who never loses an opportunity of strengthening his grasp of the music he has to conduct. M. de Lara presided at the piano.

The principal scenes were gone through carefully with perseverance and enthusiasm. The composer always knew to a shade the tone-colour he wanted and the impression he wished produced. If the singer did not at once catch his meaning, the others often helped to make it clear. For instance, when Harès (M. Seveilhac, on the right in the photograph) had to sing the words, "Comme il fait nuit!" and did not at once seize the composer's intention, it was Calvé with her inimitable realism who prompted him and first imparted to the commonplace phrase its expression of pregnant horror and shuddering terror. All this is taken as a matter of course, and the give-and-take is accepted with perfect grace.

The next rehearsal was of quite a different kind. M. Bergé, a *co-répétiteur*, presided at the piano, and Calvé and M. Seveilhac studied their stage business with M. Almanz, who gave them a rough outline of their positions on the stage for the various scenes, in order to facilitate the scenic rehearsals later on and to render them less fatiguing.



MADAME CALVÉ REHEARSING "MESSALINE" AT COVENT GARDEN.
From a Photo. by K. Schlesinger.

Calvé entered with a radiant smile and

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greeted her colleagues warmly with the charming grace which is natural to her, and was at once ready to begin work.

After the first photograph, taken in the serious mood which work demands, I begged her to give me one of her smiles for the next. With a gleeful laugh, and her eyes twinkling with mischief, she said: "I will just tell M. Flon a merry little tale!"

The scenic rehearsals are, of course, the most interesting; the conception of the rôle begins to crystallize. Before, the glow of Messaline's passion was in Calvé's voice, now it is embodied and living: her face throughout is a study. Things do not always go right from the first; the scenery, by no means complete, is only indicated here and there, much being left to the imagination; sometimes some of the characters are perforce absent.

Calvé is all earnestness at these times, and throws herself so thoroughly into her work that she is quite exhausted when the rehearsal is over. She frequently steps up to the footlights and pleads, with one of her bewitching smiles: "I should like to go over that again!"

The composer, meanwhile, is all activity and walks miles: one moment he is standing at the back of the stalls critically listening and watching the effects he has planned—the next sees him wildly gesticulating among the chorus up stage, or pointing out that the action must take place farther to the right or nearer the footlights.

Except for the dress rehearsal, most of the singers wear morning dress. Calvé's exquisite Messaline costumes of clinging crêpe-de-chine, with borders of delicate designs painted by hand, each of which is worth a singer's ransom, would soon lose their freshness if worn at rehearsals. A long black cloak did duty on this occasion for the regal red mantle with which she conceals her horror-stricken face in the last act.

Sometimes an ill-wind blows and the air becomes sultry. When Calvé is annoyed there is generally just cause for it, as, for instance, when she has to sing a duet or go through a *tête-à-tête* scene by herself because the other singer has not appeared: her face then becomes sombre; she sings, but her soul is not in her song, the divine fire no longer burns. Absence from rehearsal is a grave injustice, a great discourtesy to all who are collaborating, and doubly so when opportunities for scenic rehearsals are necessarily limited; such a thing would not be tolerated in Germany, where art is taken very seriously and opera-house regulations are



CALVÉ AS "MESSALINE."
From Photo by W. & D. Downey.

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devoid of elasticity. There are no airs and graces about Calvé: she is absolutely natural and unaffected; and it speaks highly for her as a woman that after receiving ovations wherever she goes, and being the object of so much heroine-worship, she should remain quite unspoilt, simple, and

"I really have no talent for music," she said to me one day when talking of her work. "I tried to learn the piano once, but it annoyed me and I gave it up. The mechanical means of expression act as a clog upon the interpretation.

"It is just the same in opera," she con-



From a Photo. by] MADAME CALVÉ. *[Reutlinger, Paris.*

modest. One never discovers in Calvé the least conceit or self-assertion, and she always speaks most humbly of her musical performance.

"Dear friend, I was very bad last night, was I not?" she asked M. Flon, somewhat as a child might who expected to be rebuked, on one occasion when she had made some little slip and kept the orchestra waiting.

tinued, her expressive face reflecting her feelings as she spoke; "the rhythm thwarts me and hedges me in. I should often like to dwell on a phrase or emphasize an action, but bars and beats keep me back or else hurry me on and interfere sadly with my conception of the rôle.

"No. I do not care so much for rich harmonies and intricate music. What I love

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is the simple music of the people; the songs —*les plain-chants*—of my native Aveyron; they stir me to my innermost soul, for they are the expression of the hardy race of mountaineers from which I am descended. As to the operas in which I sing, oh, yes, I am interested in all my rôles; I love them, for they form part of my life, but I often feel a longing for something higher and better—something that would satisfy my mind. I should prefer to be an actress. Then there would be none of the restraint that music imposes; I should be free to work out my conceptions.

"In fact"—and she insensibly lowered her voice—"if I were to lose my voice, as I have at times feared I might, I should really be rather glad, for then I could, without compunction, leave the operatic stage for the legitimate drama. As long as people like to hear me sing I feel bound to use the gift which has enabled me to help my family and relations for many years."

The truth is that Calvé is before all a born actress.

The divine Sarah, when asked whom she considered the finest actress in the world, replied, without a moment's hesitation, "Calvé is the greatest artist of us all!"

"Sometimes my friends accuse me of being mercenary for accepting these brilliant engagements to America, instead of remaining in my own country. But I tell them that I want the money—it means comfort and happiness to so many dear ones."

Calvé's voice is deeply moving; the limpid, bell-like upper register and the velvety, tender lower notes are used by her with consummate art in all sincerity; but would a blind man listening to her Carmen or Santuzza receive any adequate impression of her impersonation? The thing is impossible. Not one movement, one swift glance or fleeting expression of her beautiful face can we afford to miss; her movements are not studied—nor is her Carmen always the same at every performance—they come naturally because Calvé is Carmen for the time being.

She enters, her lithe body swaying gracefully as she walks, a flower between her lips, perfidious and provoking. The subtlety of her singing of "L'amour est un oiseau rebelle!" known as the Habañera, and the ironical, menacing cynicism with which she emphasizes "l'amour" are wonderful. She reproduces to the life the typical Tsigana, the gipsy who pines for freedom, and is in turn sensuous, hard, cruel, passionate, bewitching, and perverse. From her first note she seizes upon the audience and holds it captive, spell-bound until the last.

I had gone to Calvé's dressing-room between the acts, and found her slipping into the black and silver spangled dress she wears in the last act. She chatted away in her merriest mood while adding the finishing touches to the loose knot of blue-black hair, and fastening in the coquettish



CALVE AS "SANTUZZA."
From a Photo. by Benque, Paris.

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flower which nestles in the nape of her neck.

"Je suis une vraie gamine, n'est-ce pas, comme Carmen? C'est que je fais des polissonneries terribles!" and her eyes sparkled with mischievous amusement. "I quite enjoy it, I assure you; it is great fun, and then, of course, it is Carmen!"

The friend who was helping her dress asked whether she would wear any rings.

"Why, of course," she replied; "Madame Torréador is a person of importance now, you know. She is quite a rich woman and has plenty of jewels."

While speaking Calvé absently put on one or two rings, and then, looking critically at her hands:—

"No," she cried, "that will not do at all; they look too *distingué*. I must wear something more showy."

When I asked her where she learnt the bewitching dances of the gipsies, she replied:—

"When I was a child of seven I was sent to Spain to visit some of my father's relations. There was a camp of Tsiganas in the neighbourhood of the village; they fascinated me, and I watched them eagerly and picked up some of their dances. Many years later, when I returned to Spain to study Carmen among the cigarette-makers of Seville and the Tsiganas, the steps came back readily to me and I learnt all their graceful dances.

"I took Merimée's book with me and pondered over it day and night while living among the factory girls. I watched them with their lovers; studied them in joy, sorrow, and anger. I noted how their love is a mixture of passion, jealousy, and brutality; tenderness being exceedingly rare, and I remained among them until I could understand them thoroughly and feel as they did. Carmen is my most realistic study, and the next is Ophelia."

Calvé's Ophelia is quite a new creation, as far removed from that consecrated by tradition as the East is from the West. In her madness she is masterful, wild, and violent, and this is how Calvé accounts for her conception of Shakespeare's heroine:—



CALVÉ AS "HERODIAS."
From a Photo. by Fontés, Paris.



CALVÉ AS "CARMEN."
From a Photo. by Reutlinger, Paris.

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"Ophelia was passionately in love, and her love drove her mad. When I was in Milan I met a celebrated specialist in mental diseases, and as I was then studying Ophelia I asked him what he thought of her case. 'How do you picture this dreamy, love-sick girl?' I asked him.

"He replied that it was the greatest mistake, in his opinion, to picture her gentle, and he offered to take me then and there to an asylum in Milan where a case similar to that of Ophelia had come under his notice. There we found a pale, fair girl — like an English girl — who on being deserted by her lover had lost her reason. She was a prey to fits of violence and terrible anger, but it was her terror that most affected me; it was pitiable, but intensely dramatic. She would offer visitors any object that she could get hold of, only to take it back suddenly in a fit of anguish. I left the mad-house profoundly impressed, and could not forget the scene, nor dissociate it from Ophelia."



CALVÉ AS "OPHELIA."
From a Photo. by Reutlinger, Paris.

Calvé does not know English well enough to read Shakespeare in the original, but she had "Hamlet" translated to her line by line, that she might know the play independently of the libretto.

Calvé first sang Hamlet in Italy during the eighties — in Rome, Naples, Milan, and Florence — then later in England, America, St. Petersburg, and Madrid; and it was not until May, 1899, that her Ophelia was made known to Parisians at the Grand Opéra. The main facts of Calvé's career are familiar to her admirers all the world over, but what follows, told as well as my memory serves me in Calvé's own words, is not generally known:—

"I was a lively, commonplace little mortal, with plenty of spirits and a love of fun. I romped with my brother and sisters, frolicked in the fields with the lambs, chased the butterflies, watched the maids milk the cows, peeped into the dairy, and helped to make butter and cheese.

"Did I care for toys? Oh, yes. I used to skip and play at ball and fly kites with my

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brother, and run races. To this day I dearly love snow-balling, in which I still indulge in America sometimes.

"Then there was my doll; I loved her very dearly and remember her well. You must not imagine she was a great beauty—one of those elegant Paris creations with lovely curls, a faultless complexion, and little pearly teeth. No; we were brought up like Spartans—our toys were of the simplest description and mostly home-made.

"Mine was a rag-doll, with a painted face and a red cotton handkerchief tied round her for a frock. I used to rock her to sleep, kiss and love her, and then sometimes, when I was in a naughty mood, I tossed her out of the window, only to run out immediately in an agony of remorse to pick up the poor darling tenderly and hug her passionately, vowing never to be unkind to her again. I went to a convent school at St. Affrique—in the great cheese district, you know—and there I used to sing with the other children, but I was no prodigy; my voice was in no way remarkable.

"Sometimes when we were together in recreation time the girls would gather round me and say, 'Do sing us something, Emma!' Then, as the mood seized me, I would sing a song of passionate sadness and set all the girls crying, or else I stood up and sang some song I had heard in the village, unconsciously mimicking the rough gestures and action of the peasants and their *patois*, or the drinking songs of the soldiers as they sat in the garden of the inn. I often got into trouble for this, for, of course, the good sisters were horrified at some of the ditties I repeated in my innocence.

"We sang *romances* and hymns, and acted little plays at the distribution of prizes, and my mother thought I had a pretty voice and a fine talent.

"When my father, who was an engineer, died and left very little money, I was fifteen, and there were many little mouths to feed. My mother, foreseeing the possibilities of a future for my voice, decided that I should go to Paris and study singing, but none of us had any thought of the theatre. As to me, I was very pious and mystic in my girlhood, and thought I had a vocation, and looked forward to taking the veil. However, I did not make any objection to go to Paris, for I was very docile, and was most anxious to help my family. If I had been told I was to be married I should have agreed to that just as readily.

"My mother's family, of which I am very proud, is descended from the grand old race of the Albigenses, who fought with stern determination, not for wealth and possessions, but for a mere idea and for their religion. My aunts and grandmother were all fervently religious, and were very fine characters and noble women, whose memory I cherish with the deepest veneration.

"One of my aunts in particular I shall never forget. She lived at La Bastide, and I always spent my holidays with her. She was very dear to me—like a second mother, in fact—and was a very noble woman. After I had made my first success in the world I longed to get back to my village home in Aveyron; my first visit was to have been to my aunt at La Bastide, but to my great grief only her grave remained and a life-long memory.

"My first real appearance in public was at Nice, at a charity concert. At the last moment the Vicomtesse de Vigier, the popular Mlle. Crivelli of the Opéra, failed the committee, and I was called upon at a moment's notice to take her place. Yes, of course I remember what I sang—'Etoile que j'aime.' The praise and compliments I received decided me to study singing in earnest, and I went to Paris and studied under Puget and Mme. Marchesi, and later Mme. Rosina Laborde, who made me work very hard. I was far from being an artist then—I only had a pretty voice; it was in Italy that the great awakening came, when I was thrown with great artists, and more especially with Duse. Just at that time I fell seriously ill, and during a long convalescence I suddenly understood the making of a real artist, and realized that in order to become one I must forget my voice, only to think of what I had to express.

"I felt a growing longing to stir in other people the emotion which possessed my own soul. I awoke at the same time to moral consciousness, and it seemed to me that I was born again for art and suffering."

One of Calvé's greatest embodiments of suffering is in the last act of "Sapho" (Massenet), when the heroine, convinced that the good of the man she loves demands the sacrifice of her love, sits down and writes a farewell letter to him as he lies asleep on the sofa beside her; then putting on her cloak (as in the photograph reproduced on the next page) she takes a last, long look at him and leaves him for ever.

Calvé's home in Aveyron, known as the Château de Cabrières, but which she familiarly styles her "farm," is perched high

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among the clouds on a precipitous rock in the heart of the Cévennes, and overlooks the valley of the Tarn and the thousand or more acres which form her estate. The old castle, built in the eleventh century, is an irregular pile of broad towers, flanked by a farm and many outbuildings.

In the distance tower three mountains forming part of her domain, which she has named Carmen, Cavalleria, and Navarraise, the three operas which have enabled her to buy her mountain home.

"When I am weary or out of health," said Calvé, "I hurry back to my home in the loveliest part of France. The crisp, invigorating breezes which blow across the Cévennes make me feel a different being after a short time. I spend my days roaming about, visiting the peasants who have known me all my life and talk to me *sans gêne*. Oh, how happy I am in that wild, picturesque country, away from all the excitement and strain of my professional life!"



From a Photo. by] CALVÉ AS "SAPHO." *[Reutlinger, Paris.*

The castle is furnished with simple elegance, the most striking feature in it being the fine music-room, which takes up two stories in the old house and has few equals so far as acoustics go. It might be called the Hall of Triumph, for all the souvenirs and tributes presented in homage to Calvé's art are treasured up there.

On the estate Calvé has built an orphanage in which forty little girls of the poorest class, who are sorely in need of care and good food, are received for a month or six weeks at a time and looked after with loving care by the kind sisters in charge, and by Calvé herself when she is at home. The girls are taught to sew and knit, or to help in the garden and dairy, so as to fit them for a useful life.

"They are so happy there, poor little things," said Calvé, "that they shed bitter tears when it is time for them to go home and make room for others."

When I asked Calvé whether she had sung in Germany she replied, "No, not yet."

"Do you, then, dislike Germany?"

"No," she cried, eagerly, "no! On the contrary, I greatly admire the intellect of the Germans. I love their literature and music. When I was studying the rôle of Marguerite I re-read Goethe's masterpiece, endeavouring to pierce his meaning, and it is Goethe's Gretchen I aim at impersonating, not the traditional Marguerite of the French opera. I went to Germany to see the burgher maidens in their home-life, and I studied the Gretchens of the Middle Ages from books and pictures. I have tried to carry out the idea in my dress; as white was only worn by queens and noble maidens in mediæval times, I dress in colours, brown, grey, green, anything but white.

"I love Wagner's music, because it is so full of thought and mysticism. But to comprehend him thoroughly one must know German first of all, and live for some time in the atmosphere of his works, which is so intensely German. I am very lazy at languages, and have never yet summoned up

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courage to learn German. I should have to retire from the stage for two years at least to learn the language and study one or two rôles, and at present I am not prepared to make the sacrifice. It is the grand figures of Brünnhilde and Kundry which appeal to me most because they are so mystic and dramatic. Those are the parts I should like to study, but I have not the physique for it. Look at the women who are great in those rôles, like Brema: the muscles of the throat are strongly developed and powerful. I am neither muscular nor physically strong. Once I had a great longing to sing Isolde, and I studied the first act in French; but after a month I had to give it up: I was worn out and my throat ached. However, some day, perhaps, I shall begin again, and I may play some of Wagner's heroines at the Opéra Comique, perhaps Isolde; who knows?"



CALVÉ AS "ANITA" IN "LA NAVARRAISE."
From a Photo. by Reutlinger, Paris.

The last discussion I had with Calvé, one which was never finished, was on the respective merits of opera and drama. Calvé had been telling me the delight which literature afforded her—the literature of all countries, but translated into French—Shakespeare, Milton, Goethe, Schiller, and all the mystics, spiritualism, theosophy, occultism, which she seriously studies and whose teaching she believes; in fact, she attributes her marvellous success to the aid of unseen forces.

She reads many serious books and follows all the scientific discoveries of our day with the deepest interest.

"There is much more scope for art and intellect on the dramatic stage than on the operatic," Calvé urged. "The actress is more of a creator and puts more of her own observation, invention, thoughts, and feelings into her work."

"That is so in the lyrical drama," I contended, "but hardly in Wagner's dramas."

"Even there," Calvé rejoined, "there is less left to the creative genius of the actress, for the lines of interpretation are laid down in a great measure by the use of the leading motives, by the musical declamation, and by the comments and reflections of the orchestra; whereas in the spoken drama there is nothing to guide the actress but the bare words."

"But, on the other hand," I objected, "in the musical drama the singer is heavily handicapped in one respect."

"How so?" asked Calvé.

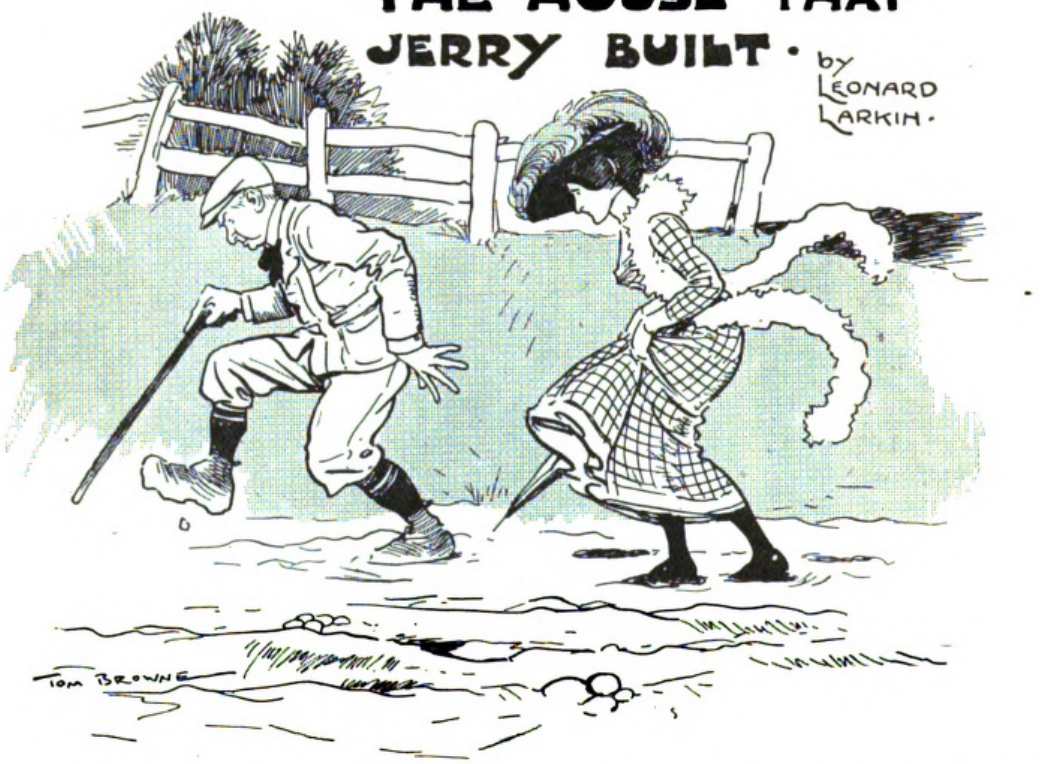
"Both actress and singer are great artists only when they lift the listener by their art out of his world into the imaginary world they have created on the stage. Music, although a powerful emotional adjunct, actually prevents the drama itself from appealing directly to the onlooker as a reality, as life, by interposing its own sensuous beauty or a tissue of subjective reflections. Only a supreme artist can bring home to the audience the full force of the drama—I might say *in spite of the music.*"

Just then we were interrupted and the discussion was put off till another day. I have not seen Calvé again since.

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THE HOUSE THAT JERRY BUILT.

by LEONARD LARKIN.



I VIEWED the house for the first time in the happiest and most hopeful circumstances. The sun shone and the birds twittered, and the clinker-strewn road with the broken fence on the other side seemed rather picturesque than otherwise. My wife was greatly pleased with everything. Far be it from me to call my wife fickle, but it is a fact that she has since changed her mind.

But on this occasion, when first my villa burst upon our gaze (if only it had never burst again in more surprising ways !), everything was seen at its best advantage. True, the "five minutes from the station" of the advertisement seemed a very modest estimate after we had floundered a mile through the mud of roads that were not yet there ; but we told each other that our natural eagerness had made the way seem longer than it was. In this we did an injustice to the advertiser's imagination : a faculty which had leaped far beyond the present possibilities of a raging motor-car on a smooth road ; an imagination that pierced the veil of years and contemplated the distant future when villa-tenants shall reach their railway-stations in flying-machines every morning. Five minutes may not be out of the question then.

The style of my villa's architecture was a style I have observed in many new suburbs. It has no very definite name, and I believe each speculative builder gives it a name in accordance with his own taste and fancy. As often as not he does not hesitate to call it the style of the late Queen Anne. The speculative builder is a prudent man, not desirous of getting into trouble, and he has probably ascertained that Queen Anne is dead.

It is a gallant and tempestuous style of art, in which every detail does its best most valorously to outstare all the others. It is clever, too. You may fancy that the door-step is stone ; but, no—it is an ingenious sort of composition which crumbles steadily and quietly, and no doubt has the advantage of being softer for tender feet. A rash observer would tell you that the gable was half-timbered ; but in reality the "timbers" are just streaks of brown paint over the plaster—much more easy to renew than timber, and handier to carry up a ladder. There are columns stuck about here and there, too, that you might suppose to be stone at least

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as solid as the doorstep; but you are sold again—they are not even that; they are wooden cylinders with iron bars up the centres, and no doubt there is some great advantage in this device if only I had time to think it out. As to the thin coat of plaster which makes the wall angles look also like stone, that has one very great advantage over the genuine material—from the speculative builder's point of view. It is an advantage shared by all the other substitutions I have named; but if you ask the speculative builder what this advantage is he will not tell you, though you may observe a twinkle in his eye. It is a trade secret. Every speculative builder is sworn not to betray trade secrets—sworn over a shovelful of *real* mortar, kept for the purpose. It is the only shovelful in the trade.

The builder of my villa is the landlord, though at first he tried his utmost to induce me to take that honourable title on myself. He expressed himself amazed to hear that I had no higher ambition than to be a mere tenant. A man of my eminence, he said—he had made up his mind about my eminence before he heard my name—a man of my eminence, distinction, wealth, and—I am sure he meant to have added—personal loveliness, owed it to his own dignity and self-respect to be landlord of his own house. Indeed, to do the thing properly and establish his credit beyond question, he ought also to be landlord of the house next door. And, by a singular coincidence, the house next door was for sale, too, the pair having been built together.

We "went over" the house in company with the builder; and here I must record a circumstance that fills me with admiration for that remarkable man. It is a fact that he opened every door in the house (including cupboard doors) and two of the windows, without breaking a single thing. Not one. Not a lock, a handle, a hinge, a frame, or a panel broke under the strain. In my foolish inexperience I thought little of this at the time, but now I marvel how he did it. It must be another trade secret.

I did *not* buy the house, nor the one next door. But I took my villa on a lease—a repairing lease. The builder thought it would be almost an insult to offer me any humbler tenancy than a repairing lease. And as to the liability—what repairs could a new house possibly require? So I escaped the insult and had the repairs instead.



"HE NEARLY CUT HIMSELF IN TWO."

The first repair was required the day we moved. The key broke in the front-door lock, and a man had to climb in at a window and unscrew the lock from the door. He unscrewed the lock, but first he nearly cut himself in two; for the sash-line chose the moment when he was climbing in at the window to break, and drop the sash on him. He said he was quite sure that several of his ribs were broken, and he strongly suspected that his spine was dislocated, at least; and he hinted that the remedy instantly needed was beer.

I am afraid that none of the removal-men understood the builder's trade secrets; they were not sufficiently gentle with my villa. They pulled all the handles off the doors and some of the fasteners off the windows through rashness in opening and shutting them. And they did not think out possibilities beforehand. There was a wardrobe, for instance, for which my villa had a constitutional antipathy, and the ensuing warfare between the two objects was what first brought home to me the full responsibility of a repairing lease; for the villa had altogether the worst of the

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battle, and got seriously wounded in every encounter.

The wardrobe would go in at the front door well enough, but that was tactical deception—a sort of strategic retreat on the part of the villa to draw its enemy into a disastrous position. The real line of defence was the stairs. They had been constructed most skilfully with a single view to the exclusion of that wardrobe. Wherever the way looked so plain and simple that there was a temptation to take the position with a rush, there some corner or projection was lying in wait to attack the invader in flank and wedge it fast. The wardrobe didn't seem to mind a bit, and at every fresh assault it took a piece out of its adversary somewhere; but it got "no forrarder," and at last it was taken prisoner altogether, with three of its corners jammed into three different holes in the plaster, and its under edge gripped by a splintery gash in the handrail.



"THE BALUSTERS GAVE WAY."

So it remained for several minutes; and then the balusters gave way. The removal-man who was dragged from under the *débris* assured me that his skull was fractured, and that it would take quite a lot of beer to save his life.

We abandoned the stairs and tried other points of attack. But my villa seemed invulnerable to this wardrobe, notwithstanding that the wardrobe was by far the stronger article of the two. It left its mark on the house at every onslaught, and retired unharmed and, I fancied, smiling—but it retired; whereas the villa, sadly mauled, and accumulating a horrible repair bill with every skirmish, still gallantly kept the assailant at bay. Till at last I began madly to wonder if it would not be cheaper, on the whole, to take the house down and build it up again round the wardrobe.

I was considering this appalling alternative when the foreman suggested that we might try the bedroom window. If only the men's constitutions could be built up first—beer being recommended for the purpose—he thought they could manage to hoist the wardrobe up the slope of a ladder, and so shove it obliquely through the window, the sash having been first removed.

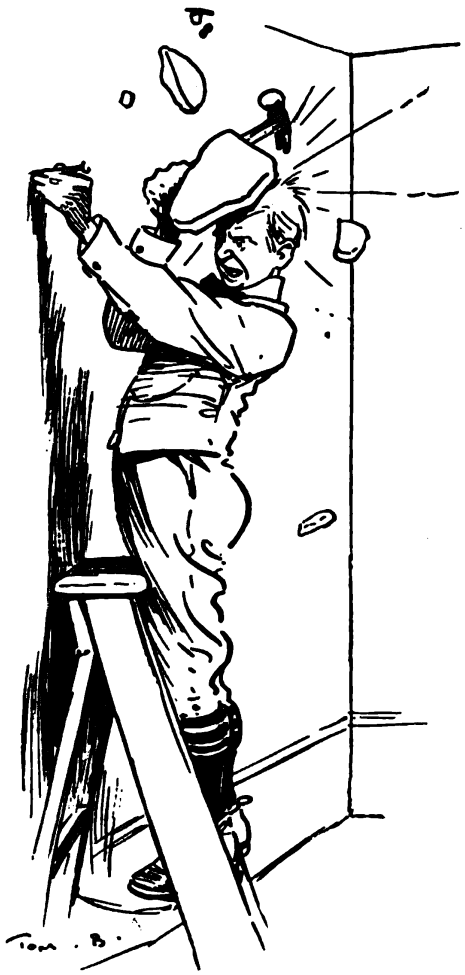
I received the proposition with joy, and proceeded at once to build up the men's constitutions, which seemed to have run down very low indeed. We sent up a man, who had no difficulty in getting out the sash; indeed, it came out much sooner than he expected, bringing an assortment of fittings and fastenings with it, and subsiding on his head with a clamorous tinkle of broken glass; so that his constitution had to be taken in hand again and built up afresh. But the foreman's suggestion succeeded in the end, though, indeed, the wardrobe was a tight fit. It was shoved and hauled up the ladder with much labour and constitutional disturbance (beer again), and, hastening upstairs to meet

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it, I had the felicity of observing the victorious object coming triumphantly into the bedroom, bringing the whole of the window-frame with it, like a collar.

The wardrobe was all right, and there was a quiet twinkle about its keyholes that betokened complacent triumph. Fortunately it seemed a good-humoured piece of furniture; if it had lost its temper in the course of hostilities nothing could have saved my villa from total destruction.

The wardrobe had hit the house pretty hard, but the effect of the carpets was alarming, too; or, rather, not so much of the carpets as of the tacking of them down. For with the concussion the ceilings below began first to crack and then to sag gracefully like stretched curtains; so I had to stop the tacking and persuade the removal-men to put down the furniture very carefully and lightly. The nervous delicacy required to carry out these instructions was obtained by the administration of more beer; and by the exercise on my own part of great care in walking about the rooms, and the use of list slippers, I was able to keep the ceilings at the original curve for several days. Then I rashly started to knock nails in the walls to hang pictures on, and as I knocked the ceiling dropped on my head in uneasy instalments. More, the jar shook other things loose, such as mantelpieces and cupboard frames; and there was no balance of advantage after all, for the nails all came out when they felt the weight of the pictures, and brought down pieces of the wall with them. So I tried replacing them with longer nails, which made a considerable difference; the difference being that larger instalments of the ceiling fell more frequently on my head as I drove the nails in, and much bigger pieces of the wall accompanied them when they fell out again. I decided that the pictures would look better on the floor.



"AS I KNOCKED THE CEILING DROPPED ON MY HEAD."

The wear and tear of moving in had mellowed my villa considerably, and given it in most places a venerable air of antique dilapidation that compared favourably with that exhibited by the most genuinely ancient baronial hall I know. I tried to get as much consolation out of this reflection as I could, for I had a sort of presentiment that I should want some consolation when the bill came in.

I found out many curious things, and altogether generally improved my education, in the first few days of my tenancy; and before long I was a deal wiser, and poorer, and wetter, and dustier, and angrier, and generally deteriorated than before I came to my villa, and had several entirely new experiences in rheumatism, as well as an improved form of bronchitis. It was not the bath that caused the bronchitis, however. I do not know the scientific name of what I suffered from that, but if you have ever sat down in a new bath full of hot water, and shortly afterward discovered that the hot water has made the enamel stick better than the most expensive sort of glue, you will understand what I mean. I cannot say precisely whether I tore more enamel off the bath or the bath tore more skin off me, but I think we averaged it out fairly even, and honours were easy. But it was a long time before I was.

For a long while the joinery saved us the cost of a cheap barometer. It bulged up and stuck and burst itself in wet weather, and shrunk and gaped wide in dry. I can just remember a little toy villa that stood in my grandmother's breakfast-room, with two doors in it and two inhabitants, one of whom kept indoors in dry weather and the other in

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wet. My villa had a somewhat similar property, with the important difference that everybody stayed in when the weather was inclined to dampness, because none of the doors would open to let us out. After a time, however, these violent changes in the woodwork abated, and it settled down to a more or less permanent shrinkage and gaping, which had the advantage of enabling one to inspect the adjoining room without opening the door, and entirely freed our servants from that troublesome backache and cold in the eye that are prevalent in households where observation is restricted to keyholes.

The floor-boards shrunk, too, and let up such steady hurricanes from some subterraneous cave of winds that the carpets rose and fell like the property sea in a theatre, and the lighter articles of furniture were blown out of window or up the chimneys, while persons of less than eighteen-stone weight—but, there, I must be careful to avoid any statement that unbelievers might be tempted to misrepresent as exaggerated. Let it suffice to say that the articles lost though the cracks — when the hurricanes were in abeyance — grew steadily in size day by day, beginning with such things as studs and cuff-links, and going on to property of a larger gauge each day, till, what with the windows and chimneys on the windy days and the floor-chasms on the others, the household was gradually impoverished of everything smaller than a coal-scuttle. I bore it for long without taking up the boards, until at last the baby, unobserved for a moment, ventured too near an unusually large crack, and—but, steady again; there are people so ignorant of the possibilities of a speculative builder's villa that they would not believe even *that*.

At any rate, I took up the boards *then* and recovered most of my missing property —to say nothing of the baby. Also I discovered that whatever ill-wishers might say of my landlord they could not justly liken him to the foolish man that built his house upon the sand; for I saw nothing anywhere distantly approaching the appearance of sand, but more than one sense bore witness that my villa was established on a foundation of beef-tins and defunct cats. This striking fact no doubt accounted in some degree for the diversifications of the architecture of Queen Anne, which surprised me on mornings when I surveyed my villa from the road. Oblique zigzags and other lines of less definable shapes appeared upon the brickwork, and the windows began to change places. This, the landlord assured me, was nothing but "a little settlement"—a statement that relieved me a great deal, for I had suspected a large earthquake. "A little settlement," it appeared, was a sort of architectural thrush, measles, teething, whooping-cough, or what-not, that every respectable house went through in its infancy. I was glad to find it was nothing worse than that; but even an architectural whooping-cough can be disconcerting when it lets in a fresh expanse of landscape almost daily into one room after another.



"A LITTLE SETTLEMENT."

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But landscape was not the only thing that passed freely through the walls, inward and outward. Rain, hail, fog, wind, sleet, snow, smoke, and gas went to and fro regardless of bricks and mortar; the gas also went regardless of pipes; and cats and dogs will not surprise me soon. As to ghosts—well, if I saw a weird human figure coming through the wall of my villa, I should know at once that the settlement was getting worse, and this was a burglar. A real ghost would disdain to pass through such a wall as mine; the job would do him no credit at all.

I hear that settlement making extensions and improvements in the dead silence of night. A quiet, intermittent clicking and grinding is the sound, as a rule, only noticeable when the household is deep in slumber. But occasionally something particular happens—some fundamental beef-tin buckles or some dead cat turns in its grave—and there is a sharp crack, and I know that in the morning I shall find an extra window somewhere, or another and a wider laceration across the fair face of Queen Anne. I am continually strengthening that front wall, too, with fresh thicknesses of wall-paper.

I think it must be on such occasions as these that my chimneys grow crookeder. They were not very straight in the beginning; but now their sinuosities would break an eel's back. Sweeps' brooms get lost in them and have to be paid for and left there. And then they catch fire and attract fire-engines—which also have to be paid for. When I look back upon my tenancy—not a long one, either—it often seems to me that it would have been really cheaper on the whole to have adopted the builder's suggestion, bought my villa—and instantly pulled it down.

There is a sort of democratic quality about the house—an equal distribution of advantages among the deserving rooms, so to speak. Thus, when onions are being cooked, the drawing-room gets as much of the smell as the kitchen; and when the dining-room fire is lit the smoke comes out of the wrong ends of all the other chimneys. When the water-pipes burst, too—and they often do things of that sort—there is a very general and impartial distribution of the water; and as to gas, while the leaks and explosions take their turns very systematically in the different rooms, the smell is always so generally diffused that it has become indissolubly associated with the tenderest tiés of home life; and never again can I experience the full flavour of domestic felicity without a good gas escape close under my nose.

Now, I wonder why it is that the mere mention of my nose should instantly remind me of the drains at my villa? Extraordinary, isn't it? Well, the drains were most conveniently laid, nice and close to the surface, and rising gradually as they led away from the house. There was never any difficulty about finding them. The gardener often finds them still with a spade or a rake—once he found one with a broom. No difficulty about knowing where to put them back, either, if you happened to fetch any up in digging—anywhere would do. It wasn't as though they'd been cemented at the joints, or led anywhere in particular. They had been put in in compliance with the prevalent superstition in favour of having drains of some sort, and such was the perfection of the system that if you pulled up a drain-pipe here and there and used it for a chimney-pot or anything of that sort it made no difference whatever.

I have left off having dinner-parties, not being a lawyer, and having some doubts as to the precise legal liability attaching to a tenant with a repairing lease whose guest gets killed in carrying out a dinner engagement. I had a little dinner once, by way of house-warming, soon after we came in, but I am not persevering. I was not so much disturbed by the tile that shot off the roof and laid a friend low in the front garden—not so much as he was, at any rate—because that is a thing that might happen to anybody, and people ought to look out for things like that, and, after all, he had not actually arrived. And although it was a little inconvenient to have the drawing-room hearth suddenly sink at the front and pitch the fireplace, with the fire in it, face downward on the hearth-rug, still that is the sort of thing that does happen when a young house catches a settlement; and. we were going into the dining-room presently, in any case. But I had made a rather serious mistake in the dining-room. For fear of accidents I had knocked down the looser parts of the sagging ceiling with a broom, ignorant that I was weakening the main support of the floor above; for in my house the floors and ceilings were devised and constructed on a new and ingenious principle: the floor held up the ceiling from above, while the ceiling supported the floor from below. So that when the well-meaning but incautious nurse walked across the bedroom floor to inspect the sleeping baby, first a large piece of ceiling fell

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into the soup, and then the nurse followed it, in a tempestuous tangle of legs and arms and boards and plaster. And somehow I sort of got discouraged at last.

We went to bed somewhat discontented that night, and we took our umbrellas with us; for the tile that had cancelled the invitation of one of our guests was not the only one gone from the roof.

I am now having the house painted all over just to hold it together temporarily till I have had an interview with the builder. I am, in fact, anticipating another settlement—a final one. I have bought a large pole-axe.



"THEN THE NURSE FOLLOWED."

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A CHAPTER OF ACCIDENTS

BY MRS NEWMAN



A childless widow with a large income ought certainly to do more for those in need than she was supposed to do, and ugly rumours had reached his ears of poor relations neglected and great people cultivated.

AFTER enjoying the best of health for fifty years, Mrs. Vigogne had found it necessary to summon medical assistance, and this just as she was in the midst of her various preparations for Christmas and the New Year.

"Nothing serious—no cause for anxiety. All that is required are complete rest, avoidance of physical and mental strain, and a course of tonic treatment," had been the verdict of the astute doctor, not unaccustomed to deal with wealthy patients and like ailments. "Over-exerted yourself when a little below par, most probably, Mrs. Vigogne."

She had gracefully acknowledged to having perhaps overtaxed her strength in the way of shopping and what not during the late severe weather.

"There are so many demands upon one at this season, and one is glad to make it the occasion of reminding one's friends that they are kept in remembrance."

"Oh, yes, of course, very right and proper," had replied Dr. Warner, glancing from the faded face, with its stereotyped smile and expressionless eyes, towards a side table upon which was ranged a row of parcels large and small. Was she, after all, more liberal than she had the credit for being—one of those who do good by stealth?

Mrs. Vigogne considered herself in society, and to this her late husband's name and wealth gave her some claim. Nor was there anything on her own side to be ashamed of, could she have looked over the non-success in life of some of her relatives.

Unaccustomed to illness of any kind, she had been not a little alarmed by the sudden development of symptoms that reminded her she was mortal. She was unaware that it was but an ordinary attack of dyspepsia and that the remedy was summarily confided to the doctor's note-book in one expressive word.

More than ready to carry out his instructions in the matter of taking precautions, she installed herself in a boudoir adjoining her bedroom, giving orders for the house to be kept very quiet and no callers to be admitted. Moreover, in her anxiety to avoid again overtaxing her strength, she had engaged a young girl to act as secretary in the matter of attending to her somewhat extensive correspondence, and otherwise as a useful help—permanently should her services prove satisfactory.

This young lady was later than usual, and Mrs. Vigogne was becoming impatient at the delay, her eyes turning frequently from the clock on the mantelshelf to the door.

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Miss Blake must be given to understand that punctuality was very essential if she wished to keep her situation, she was telling herself. Yes, she must certainly receive a hint about that, as well as two or three other matters in which she was remiss. Mrs. Vigogne was not sure that she was all that her testimonial had ascribed to her. She had noticed a doubtful, questioning look in the young girl's eyes when a letter was being dictated to her, and she had occasionally repeated the words in an interrogative tone, which was objectionable in a subordinate. Moreover, she did not appear amenable to reproof at such times, a quick flush coming into her cheeks and a set expression to her lips, which looked very like temper, although she could not be said to be overtly rebellious.

"Nearly half an hour late, Miss Blake," she said, when presently the door opened and the young girl entered the somewhat overheated and perfumed room, its French windows opening to a balcony filled with plants. The house was situated in a short, somewhat dull, but eminently select street, leading to a square of such aristocratic supremacy as to confer a distinction upon its immediate neighbourhood.

"I am sorry, Mrs. Vigogne; I left home in good time, but it was raining so heavily, and the omnibuses were all so full, that I had to wait," a little nervously replied the young girl. Although too pale and anxious-looking for her years, she gave promise of being a beautiful woman in the future, and her earnest, reflective eyes and well-cut mouth and chin indicated that she was not without character and individuality.

"I hope your clothes are not damp," said Mrs. Vigogne, drawing her soft warm wrap about her and wheeling her chair nearer to the fire.

A hot flush rose to the young girl's cheeks, in her guilty consciousness that she did not possess a waterproof, as she replied:—

"I had an umbrella."

"Had you not better sit nearer the window?"

Miss Blake drew her chair to the end of the table near the window and quietly waited for further instructions.

"Be good enough to commence by separating the business letters—tradesmen's accounts and so forth, to be examined later—and pass me the rest one at a time, Miss Blake," said Mrs. Vigogne, with an expectant smile. The contents of some of them, at least, would be pleasant reading, she was thinking.

The young girl sorted the letters, put those which were evidently on business aside, and passed the first of the others that came to hand to Mrs. Vigogne.

She took the letter from its envelope and glanced at it, murmuring to herself, "Only from Harriet, I think. Yes, I see."

But as she proceeded to gather the contents a look of surprise came into her face.



"'I HOPE YOUR CLOTHES ARE NOT DAMP,' SAID MRS. VIGOGNE."

"My Dear Marian,—How can I sufficiently thank you for the very beautiful and valuable present you have sent me? It is so much more than I could possibly have hoped for. To speak of it as a trifle, too! It will be of the greatest assistance to me and my child; and it is all the more valued because it is given spontaneously, without any appeal to your kindness. Knowing, as you do, what my circumstances are, you will, I feel sure, not object to my disposing of your beautiful

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gift. Indeed, I have no doubt that this was in your mind when sending it to me. Hoping that the thought of the many comforts your kindness will purchase for me and my child in the hour of need will bring happiness to you in the New Year, and with my heartfelt gratitude, believe me, dear Marian, your affectionate cousin,—HARRIET."

"Beautiful and valuable present—valuable? What in the world did it mean? Gratitude for favours to come?" Mrs. Vigogne was asking herself, her thoughts reverting to the contents of the parcel she had sent to her widowed cousin. "Sell the trumpery chiffon fichu, which had only cost two and elevenpence three-farthings at one of the summer sales? Is she laughing at me? Oh, no, gratitude for favours to come, of course," putting the letter on to the little table by her side, with a half-derisive smile.

"The next, Miss Blake. Stay"—with a sudden foreboding. "Is there a letter bearing the Hants postmark?"

The young girl turned over the letters. "Yes, here is one."

"Give it to me."

Mrs. Vigogne hurriedly tore open the envelope and looked through the letter, her face paling as she read:—

"DEAR MRS. VIGOGNE,—Some mistake must have arisen, I think—at least, I hope it is only that—with regard to the packet I received from you. I do not like to believe that you could have so far forgotten what is due to me as to present me with a half-soiled chiffon fichu—one of those we together purchased at the July sale. Nor is the jest, as I suppose it was intended to be, about my admiration for such things in better taste. I must hope you will be able to explain what at present appears an uncalled-for affront, by return of post. I should be sorry, indeed, if our friendship is to be ended in this way, as it most certainly must unless I receive a satisfactory explanation and apology.—Yours, etc., AURELIA DUMOND."

"Lady Dumond! Good gracious, send a half-soiled fichu to *her!*" mentally ejaculated Mrs. Vigogne, with the remembrance of their confidences about "picking up" such little bargains to come in useful by-and-by for presentation—to poor friends and dependents understood. The fichu must have been put into Lady Dumond's parcel by mistake; and the brooch and pendant it had cost her so much to part with! Mrs. Vigogne sank back in her chair, catching in her breath with a gasp of dismay as the truth suddenly broke upon her. Yes, it had been sent to her cousin Harriet, in such straits since the sudden death of her husband, and the fichu intended for her had gone to Lady Dumond, one of the proudest women in the three kingdoms!

The brooch and pendant had been one amongst a valuable collection of jewels which was bequeathed to her by her late husband with the rest of his property. There had been some question about these jewels, it being considered they were heirlooms that ought to go to his brother's son. The latter had, however, been advised that he might find it difficult to enforce his claim, since there was no authentic inventory; and the late Mr. Vigogne had been a connoisseur and collector, frequently adding to and exchanging the jewels. By making a stir in the matter his nephew might deprive himself of the rest of the property that the widow could dispose of as she pleased, and she had given him reason for hoping this would eventually be his.

The brooch and pendant were of exceptionally fine brilliants and sapphires, and had been intended as a graceful recognition of many a past hospitality and investment for many a future visit to the Dumonds. The value of the gift had been carefully calculated, and it had been sent with many a sigh of regret that nothing less would suffice.

The jewel would fetch at least eight or nine hundred pounds, and it might be already sold for less than half its value if her cousin had taken it to some jeweller who did not know its worth, or was inclined to trade upon her ignorance. Yes, it was too late! There was nothing to be done now beyond explaining the mistake to Lady Dumond and sending another jewel of equal value, which she could not bear to think of.

She silently held out her hand for another letter. "What next?" she was thinking. Surely there could be nothing much worse than what she had already received. In this she was a little premature.

"DEAR MRS. VIGOGNE" ("Aunt Marian" scored through),—"I am reluctant indeed to break off all further communication with you, but this you yourself oblige me to do by the extraordinary pains you have taken to bring it about. It was quite open to you to send me nothing, as my previous experience had taught me to expect, but the New Year's present of a sixpenny tie was quite an unnecessary piece of munificence. You might, at least, have spared yourself the expense of registering the precious gift. If this were all

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I could have passed it over, but the unwarrantable insult—there is no other word for it—offered to the lady I am about to make my wife, whom you have not seen and who has given not the slightest cause for offence, I cannot and will not look over. I return your letter to her, which you had the impertinence to enclose with mine, with the contempt it deserves, and must decline any further correspondence with one capable of writing it.—JAMES ARBUTHNOT."

An insult! A cheque for fifty guineas, enclosed in a prettily worded letter of congratulation upon the approaching event; hoping that her nephew's *fiancée* would purchase some little souvenir of the occasion in his aunt's name, and expressing the desire to very soon know more of one she had heard so highly spoken of. Moreover, in this she had been quite sincere. The marriage would be one of which she entirely approved. Her husband's nephew was clever, ambitious, already representing his county in the House, and giving promise of making some mark in the political world. The lady he was about to marry was the only child and heiress of a county magnate, and, if a few years older than her *fiancé*, was, in other respects, all that could be desired.

With trembling fingers Mrs. Vigogne unfolded the letter, torn contemptuously across, that her nephew had enclosed in his own. Yes, as she had feared, another mistake, and a still more serious one!

This was a letter she had written to a young girl engaged to a nephew of her own, and written in a different spirit from that intended for the bride-elect of James Arbuthnot. Edward Norman was a clerk in a solicitor's office, beginning upon a pittance and with very little prospect of rising to any eminence. Marriage for him meant ruin, decided Mrs. Vigogne. In very plain language she had written to the young lady, giving her opinion of the ill-advised, not to say disastrous, step they were about to take. She had even gone so far as to more than hint that she considered her nephew Edward was being drawn into a marriage by one more clever than scrupulous, ending with the warning that when the inevitable consequences came they must not look to her for help of any kind.

Worse than all, there was an allusion to the young girl's age being in itself an obstacle, and this would hardly be understood, as she had meant it, by James Arbuthnot's *fiancée* as referring to her other nephew's engagement. No, she felt there could be no explaining away an affront such as this.

And what had become of the shares she had sent to her nephew? That cheque for fifty guineas had represented but a fourth part of the value of the present she had sent to James Arbuthnot—the shares which, the last time they had met, he had told her might, if carefully manipulated, still be worth from two to three hundred in the market. Indeed, he had offered to give her a couple of hundred or so and take them off her hands; and, as he was a careful man who might be expected to have private information on the matter, she considered she was, in fact, presenting him with that sum. Instead of these shares he had received a sixpenny necktie!

Mrs. Vigogne turned towards Miss Blake and, not a little angrily, said:—

"There has been a series of mistakes respecting those letters and parcels sent off a few days ago, Miss Blake: mistakes that will place me in a position of great difficulty with some of my friends, and for which you are entirely to blame."

"How could that be, Mrs. Vigogne? I carefully carried out all your instructions."

"The letters must have been put into the wrong parcels. I particularly explained that they were to be numbered consecutively in the order I had placed them, beginning at the right hand, and that as you finished each letter I dictated it was to be enclosed in rotation."

"I did that, and marked those that were to be registered."

"Then how do you account for the mistakes that have arisen?"

"I cannot. Unless"—after a moment's hesitation—"you had removed the first parcel before I began, and, I think—— Yes, I remember now. There was a packet on the table by your side, and I afterwards saw you put it last in the row. If it was removed from the end on the right it must have thrown them all out in the numbering."

Mrs. Vigogne did remember. She had, in fact, been so reluctant to part with that brooch and pendant that she had put the parcel containing the case on the table by her side to take another look at it, and had forgotten to replace it until too late. She was obliged to acknowledge that she herself had made the mistake, although she did so a little grudgingly.

"Had you reminded me of that at the time it would have spared me a great deal of trouble and annoyance, Miss Blake. It was being an invalid which rendered it necessary for me to engage an assistant, and one naturally expects that a certain amount of

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"HOW DO YOU ACCOUNT FOR THE MISTAKES THAT HAVE ARISEN?"

interest will be shown in work that is undertaken."

"I am very sorry."

"I have most reason to be sorry, I think."

Not only was the thought of the brooch and pendant rankling in her mind, but she was disturbed by some new feeling which she could not account for. Was it the consciousness that the letter returned to her ought not to have been written, and that Miss Blake had shown her at the time it ought not? If so, if she felt that in her disapproval of what she considered to be a *mésalliance* she had shown the lack of certain qualities she was desirous of having the credit for possessing, she was not the less annoyed at the young girl for perceiving it. Twice had Miss Blake repeated those words, "more clever than scrupulous," as though to ask if she really meant them.

"I fear you are not sufficiently experienced for the work you have undertaken, Miss Blake."

"I told you I had no previous experience, Mrs. Vigogne, but I am very desirous of doing my best," replied the young girl, whitening to the lips with the fear she was about to be dismissed.

There was a tap at the door and a servant looked in.

"Mr. Craig hopes you will be able to see him, ma'am. I told him that you did not see visitors, but he says it is very important he should see you, and he will only remain a few minutes."

The curate! Was he, too, mixed up in the complications — had that five shillingsworth of stamps gone to the wrong person?

"Oh, I cannot. Wait a moment, Susan; say I am not able to receive visitors just now, but I will make an exception in Mr. Craig's favour."

"Better know the worst," she was thinking.

A young man of about seven or eight and twenty, his genial face wearing just now a somewhat perplexed expression, entered the room.

"I am sorry to trouble you, Mrs. Vigogne, but the vicar asked me to call. He does not quite know what to do with regard to the cheque you have sent him."

It was not for Mr. Craig to explain the reason why the vicar had begged him to undertake the task. In fact, Mr. Selborne a little shrank from going to her himself, although he did not hesitate to speak his mind when they did meet. He had indeed expressed himself rather strongly with regard to the little she did in the parish, where there were very many poor as well as rich, and she had quite as strongly resented what he said.

"In your letter you speak of enclosing your usual subscription, which has invariably been five shillings, and the vicar found a cheque for fifty guineas. I need hardly tell you how great would be the help of that sum to us just now. It warms one's heart to think of the blankets and coals and many a good dinner it would purchase," his face brightening with a smile. "But the cheque is made out for Miss Letitia Somers and not endorsed by her."

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"It was intended for Miss Letitia Somers, Mr. Craig."

"In that case there is nothing left me but to return it, I suppose. The vicar feared there might be some mistake," a little ruefully taking out his pocket-book.

Mrs. Vigogne was gazing reflectively down at her jewelled fingers. What if she were to give him the fifty guineas after all? The sum was large, but little enough in comparison with the rapidly accumulating capital saved from her large income, and her intention of enriching her already rich nephew had been not a little weakened by his impertinent letter. Moreover, although she was hardly conscious of this, there was the feeling that the vicar's approbation would be welcome to her at this crisis. There was a not unpleasant little stir in her mind from another cause which she did not at that moment attempt to analyze.

"Here is the cheque, Mrs. Vigogne."

Again she hesitated. Then, hurriedly, as though afraid of altering her mind if she delayed, and half-surprised, half-proud of her generosity, she said, glancing, she knew not why, towards the young girl bending over the accounts: "I will not disappoint you, Mr. Craig. You shall have another cheque for the same amount. And"—with what was intended for a little side-blow at the vicar: a reminder of many a little speech of his that had annoyed her—"you must tell Mr. Selborne that you have succeeded where he might have failed."

"Oh, he won't in the least mind who succeeded, so that his poor get the benefit," cheerfully replied Mr. Craig.

"Be good enough to make out a cheque and give it me to sign, Miss Blake."

Mr. Craig's thanks as he took leave sounded very agreeably to Mrs. Vigogne's ears. It was a kind of pleasure to which she was unaccustomed. "He appears quite as elated as though I had given the fifty guineas to *him*," thought Mrs. Vigogne.

She sat silent awhile, glancing now and again towards the young girl, still engaged in making a list of the accounts, then presently said, perhaps with the desire to show what another besides Mr. Craig thought of her generosity:—

"Read this letter from my cousin, Miss Blake. I will ask you presently to reply to it for me."



"MR. CRAIG'S THANKS AS HE TOOK LEAVE SOUNDED VERY AGREEABLY."

She was not a little surprised as she read the evidently sincere expressions of gratitude. Had she judged Mrs. Vigogne unfairly?

"There was no mistake made about this letter, was there, Mrs. Vigogne?"

The latter was a little nonplussed; if she acknowledged there had been, the gratitude would also be a mistake.

"Well—no, on the whole — perhaps not."

"It must be so delightful to have the power to help people."

"If what one does is appreciated."

"Appreciated? Oh, that matters so little in comparison, does it not?"

"You do not care for appreciation, Miss Blake?"

"I am afraid I do more than I ought, since one has so often to do without it; but," with a little half-smile to herself, "I shall learn in time not to want the unattainable, I suppose."

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"Which means that you have had some disappointment?"

"Not exactly that, Mrs. Vigogne. Am I to write the letter now?"

"It would be as well, perhaps. Just a few lines to Mrs. Langly, at that address, stating that I am much gratified by her letter, and am hoping to see her here as soon as I am convalescent."

The young girl's pen travelled quickly over the paper, then, as she turned to take up an envelope, her eyes fell upon a letter she had not previously seen.

"This has not been opened, and it is not a business letter, Mrs. Vigogne," she said, noticing the crest on the envelope.

The latter took it a little doubtfully. "Not another mistake. Not that five shillings-worth of stamps returned with contempt, I hope," said Mrs. Vigogne, inclined to regard the straying of those stamps as almost a jest in comparison with other things that had lost their way.

"DEAR MADAM,—I have been advised that you may perhaps be able to assist me with regard to a difficulty in which I find myself placed, and this will, I trust, excuse my applying to you."

"Someone else wanting assistance!" she ejaculated. "There really seems to be no end to the appeals one gets of that kind!" She was about to throw the letter aside when her attention was caught by the next line, and she read on, a very different expression coming into her face.

"I have been given to understand that Miss Norman, who a short time since resided near Falmouth, is a niece of yours, and, as she has left the place and I am unable to discover her present address, I am hoping you may be able to give me some clue to it. I ought to explain that I am very desirous of winning her for my wife, and that it is her knowledge of this which causes her to keep out of the way, she having been led to believe that my people strongly object to the marriage. We know now by whom the mischief was made and the end that was in view. I will not trouble you by going farther into this. It is sufficient to say that Miss Norman was induced to think that if the marriage took place I should be disinherited by my father of all but a barren title. He has, in fact, neither the will nor the power to do anything of the kind. On the contrary, he is very desirous of welcoming the woman I love. I am quite as determined to find her as she is to keep out of the way, venturing as I do to think she returns my love, and it is this which has led her to prefer what she believes to be my welfare to her own.

"Immediately after her father's death she disappeared, and has, so far, baffled all attempts to find her. The vicar there gave me your address, and I have thought that perhaps Miss Norman might have communicated with you. More he would not say, being, I fancy, bound to secrecy in the matter.

"Can you assist me? I have called two or three times, but have been given to understand that you see no one just now. I did not leave a card in case Miss Norman should be with you, and if she saw my name she might take wing before I had time to give an explanation. Could you send me a line or, better still, grant me an interview, I should be grateful beyond words. Meantime, believe me, dear Mrs. Vigogne, truly yours, SEVERAN."

"Severan! Severan! Could he really be——?"

Mrs. Vigogne took up the book generally kept near at hand, and more interesting to her than any other.

"Yes, 'fifth earl—only son—Gloucestershire—Warwickshire—Berkeley Square.'"

She put the book on the low table by her side and sat gazing straight before her, dazzled and bewildered by the wonderful prospect opening out to her mental vision.

Her niece—the daughter of a poor lieutenant in the Navy—to be sought after in this fashion by one upon whom a duke would be proud to bestow his daughter! The Normans could boast of good blood, to be sure, but really! Lady Severan! Why, she would take precedence of a Dumond! *Dear* Mabel! Yes, of course she must be found as quickly as possible; in her heart of hearts having no doubt that she would be found when the right time came.

Mrs. Vigogne had been too long accustomed to study the weaker side of human nature to have much knowledge of the stronger. That any girl could possibly give up such a prospect for the motives her niece had the credit for she did not believe, although she might think it necessary to keep up the fiction, since this wonderful lover admired it so much.

To give some vent to her feelings, which she found it somewhat difficult to control in her pride and excitement, she turned towards Miss Blake, and said, endeavouring to speak in a matter-of-course tone:—

"This is a letter which I must make an

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effort to reply to myself, Miss Blake. When a peer of the realm addresses me, I suppose I ought to reply to him personally, especially when it is written upon a question of importance to me and my family. But I have no objection—I think I should like you to see the letter."

The young girl read it slowly through, more slowly than was necessary, Mrs. Vigogne thought, a little impatiently.

"Quite a romance in real life, is it not, Miss Blake?"

"It seems so."

"Such a match for her; I am really quite proud of my niece!"

"She, too, has reason for being proud and—humble—and—all sorts of things to have won such love as that, has she not?"

"I have not seen her since she was a little child, but it was said she was growing up quite pretty," musingly went on Mrs. Vigogne. "I really had no idea—she must be more than ordinarily beautiful!"

"She may be ambitious, perhaps, and would not be satisfied even with being beautiful! One of those girls who want to be loved for—oh, something or other, that goes to make us ourselves."

"I do not quite understand you, Miss Blake."

"I do not understand myself sometimes, Mrs. Vigogne. I was only thinking that your niece might not care to be a ladyship, and, in that case, would wish he were not a lord"—with a little laugh that sounded half a sob.

"No girl would be so foolish as that, I think."

"But if all girls wanted to marry lords there would not be enough to go round, and they would have to be fought for, or raffled for, or something of that sort, you know."

Mrs. Vigogne looked a little curious as well as surprised. She had not before seen the young girl in this mood. That Miss Blake had a mind of her own she knew; but she generally gave the impression of keeping a tight rein over her feelings, and she seemed suddenly to have become emotional, tears and smiles in her face at the same time. Her whole bearing was different! She presently remembered a little half-admission, as it had seemed to her. "Ah, yes, she had judged correctly. There had been a disappointment, and it was too much to expect her to rejoice over another's good fortune, perhaps."



"MR. NORMAN AND MISS WEST WISH TO SEE YOU, MA'AM."

The door was opened again and a servant looked in.

"Mr. Norman and Miss West wish to see you, ma'am."

"Really, Susan, when you know——"

"It's not a bit of use my saying you can't see them, for they are like the gentleman that's just gone, and won't be said 'no' to," a little crossly replied Susan, not choosing to take the blame.

"Tell them——" Mrs. Vigogne paused, suddenly remembering that Edward Norman could certainly not have come to revile her for sending him a sixpenny necktie. Nor could Miss West have received the letter intended for James Arbuthnot's *fiancée*. Instead of saying what she had meant to say, she added, "I will see them, Susan."

Her eyes turned curiously towards the door, when it was presently opened again to admit a tall, well-built, pleasant-looking young man and a fair, graceful girl of between seventeen and eighteen years of age.

"We felt we must come to thank you personally for your great kindness, Aunt Marian. A letter would not half explain the gratitude we feel. To begin with, this is my Helen, whom your goodness will enable me very soon to call my wife."

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Mrs. Vigogne was equal to the occasion now, and welcomed them graciously enough. They took the seats she indicated and, noticing that they glanced towards the young girl bending over her work at the writing-table, she said: "This young lady has been acting as confidential secretary for me during my illness."

Both bowed smilingly to her, and the courtesy was gracefully acknowledged, Miss Blake bowing as smilingly in return.

Understanding now that the letter—the writing of which had somewhat puzzled him—had been written by the young secretary, Edward Norman saw that he might speak freely.

"You have given us both the happiness we had almost given up hoping for, Aunt Marian; such generosity I did not expect, and had not the slightest grounds for expecting."

"You mean—that is, you are alluding to the shares?" seeing now that they must have gone to him. "You received them?"

"Yes, thank you a thousand times; they arrived safely, but, if you will excuse my saying so, they should have been registered, as some protection against loss. Your letter to Helen, too, so large-hearted in its kindness. I assure you she thinks it no less valuable."

"I do, indeed," said the young girl. "It was more than good of you to write to me in that way, Mrs. Vigogne."

"I feel that I know you as I have not before known you, Aunt Marian," said the young man, reddening a little with the consciousness of many a contemptuous thought of her meanness.

She, too, was looking a little conscious and confused by all this warmth of gratitude for what she had not intended to give, as she said:—

"The shares were for ——" She glanced at the two happy faces, and had not the heart to add, "James Arbuthnot."

"They were worth a thousand pounds when you sent them, but they would realize six or seven times as much as that now."

A thousand! James Arbuthnot had offered to give her a couple of hundred pounds, as though out of kindness—just to take them off her hands!

"They are going up by leaps and bounds, and already represent quite a little fortune. Did you not know they were likely to do this, Aunt Marian?" beginning to look a little anxious.

She returned his gaze for a moment or two, then quietly replied:—

"I gave them to you for what they may be worth, Edward, and," speaking more decidedly as she went on, "I shall be glad to know they have increased in value in your hands."

"They are a fortune now, and my governor, who knows what he is talking about, says they will soon be worth a very large one. He is in earnest, too, for he suggested that there will presently be a partnership vacant in the firm, and I might do worse than employ my capital that way, if I do not wish to be an idle man. You may guess what that means to me. Instead of grinding my life out for thirty shillings a week, I shall be a man of means with a nice place of my own to return to after business; and in time"—he broke off with a little laugh that rang pleasantly through the room—"well, there is no knowing where it will stop; for I like work, and am not the fellow to let the grass grow under my feet. You will see me at the top of the tree in no time, and have the pleasure of knowing that it is you I have to thank for it all. Be quick to get well and let us come again soon, then you will see. We must not stay any longer now. Indeed, we had the greatest difficulty in persuading your servant to let us in, but I felt sure it would not hurt you to listen to a few words of gratitude and to know how much good you have done for us, so I fought it out with her."

"Come and dine with me on Thursday—just a friendly little dinner to meet my cousin Harriet and, it may be, one other." After a moment or two's reflection she added: "Can you tell me anything about your Uncle William's daughter? Do you know where she is now, Edward? I have heard nothing from her since her father's death, but I believe she has left Cornwall."

"No, I have not seen her since she was quite a little child. You see, uncle lived so far off, and he was a little stand-offish, I fancy, for he only occasionally sent a line in reply to my letters, and I could never get to hear much of my cousin. I suppose the truth was—oh, well, one can pretty well guess. Poor people as well as rich ones have their defects, and are apt to be a little over-sensitive and meet pride with pride. I'm afraid they were very poor."

"I made my brother an allowance," said Mrs. Vigogne, less satisfied with the thought that it was but thirty pounds a year than she would have been a few days previously. What if some of her superfluous capital, the investing of which gave her so much trouble,

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might have prolonged his life or, at any rate, have enabled him to obtain the comforts that are so much needed in illness! "Had I known more was required, of course it would have been forthcoming. As to Mabel, I am very desirous she should be found as quickly as possible, for reasons I will explain to you more fully on Thursday."

"I shall find her, never fear. I made up my mind about that as soon as good fortune came to me. I shall make it my business to go to Cornwall and hunt her up. We mean to induce her to come and live with us and share the best we have. She won't be able to withstand Helen and me together, and she'll soon find we are in earnest."

"I am very desirous she should be found," repeated Mrs. Vigogne; "I hope you will be able to bring me some news of her when you come again. Good-bye."

They shook hands, and were about to pass the young girl sitting at the writing-table, with a smile and a bow, when she rose and put out her hand with a murmured "Good-bye," looking agitated, and as though she had some difficulty in keeping back the tears in her eyes.

Mrs. Vigogne looked curiously on, and as soon as the door closed the young girl said, with a somewhat nervous little laugh:—

"One forgets the conventionalities sometimes, and it is as well one should."

"You think so?"

"With some, yes, and—they seem so—everything that is kind."

"They are that, I believe, and they certainly make an attractive-looking young couple. But you are tired, cold, Miss Blake? Come nearer to the fire, child, you are so pale," said Mrs. Vigogne, in a tone and manner that would have surprised those who thought they knew her best and certainly surprised herself.

"No, thank you, I do not feel cold," hesitatingly.

"You are not thinking of what I said this morning, are you? I was a little annoyed, and spoke too decidedly under the impression that you were to blame for the mistakes that occurred. As I told you, I afterwards saw that I myself was to blame, and I do not now regret it, therefore you need give no more thought to the matter."

"It is not that. There is something I ought to tell you; it would have been better to do so at first; I see that now, but I was afraid. The truth is, I thought you so different from what you really are, and I did not want to appeal to you in any way."

"Appeal—you?"

"As things were, it might have appeared that. Now everything is changed for me."

A letter was brought in and presented to Mrs. Vigogne.

"Read it to me, Miss Blake; I am getting tired of letter-reading," she said, feeling that there could be nothing to come now which the young girl might not see.

As she opened it the five dozen stamps fell out.

"The stamps!" thought Mrs. Vigogne. "Now, where do they come from?"

"DEAR MRS. VIGOGNE,—My husband and I feel that we must not accept the enclosed for our boys' visit to the pantomime. Indeed, their uncle took them to Drury Lane last night, after they had dined with him at the Cecil—you know how nicely he does these little kindnesses—and therefore we must not let them go again this vacation. Hoping you have now recovered your cold,—Yours truly, AMY MARCHMONT."

"That those stamps should go there! As you know, I had written to engage a five-guinea box for those boys."

"Yes, here is the voucher," said the young girl, looking through the papers.

"Then the box must have remained empty while they were paying for another. Had they been inclined to give me credit for good intentions they might have supposed it was a mistake, especially since I have given them a box for the last three years. I shall not take the trouble to explain, at any rate for the present," telling herself it would only be the loss of a couple of dinners during the season.

"And now for your revelation, Miss Blake. Am I right in the supposition that it relates to a love quarrel and a reconciliation?"

"No, not a quarrel. It is——"

The door was opened once more and Susan looked in, a smile—brought by a golden argument that had been used—broadening over her face.

"Lord Severan begs to know if you can see him for a few minutes, ma'am."

"Lord Severan! Oh, yes, show him here, Susan," promptly.

A young man of about seven or eight and twenty, who, if not handsome, had a strong and kindly face, presently entered the room.

"I trust you will excuse my pertinacity, Mrs. Vigogne. The servant thought you might not be able to see me; but, as my errand is of great importance to me, I induced her to ask you. You received my letter?"

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"Yes"—adding to the young girl, as though to draw his attention to the presence of a stranger, "I will not detain you longer, Miss Blake. Indeed, you have done quite enough for to-day, I think."

Why, what in the world had come to her? Instead of quitting the room the young girl came blushing and smiling forwards.

He looked round and sprang towards her, holding out both hands.

"Mabel! You! This is good fortune indeed!"



"MABEL! YOU! THIS IS GOOD FORTUNE INDEED!"

She looked at him a moment, then put her hands into his.

"Gerald!"

Mrs. Vigogne sank back in her chair. All that had gone before seemed as nothing in comparison with this!

"I have been reading your letter," said Mabel to him, in a low, tremulous voice. "I know now that I need not have kept out of the way." Then her eyes filled with tears of happiness; she turned to Mrs. Vigogne: "I was just about to tell you when Gerald came in, Aunt Marian."

"Of course, I can see what is so very plain, child. But why did you not take me into your confidence before?"

"I did not know you as I do now, and I did not want to talk about things."

"But how was it you came here?"

"The rector of our place is a friend of the vicar here, and wrote to ask him to recommend me in case he heard of any work that I could undertake. Mr. Selborne heard that you were seeking for someone to write for you, and I came." To Lord Severan she said: "I took the name of Blake, my mother's maiden name, in the hope of concealing my identity. Of course, I did not foresee your coming here."

"Don't you think I'm a lucky fellow, Mrs. Vigogne? As I told Miss Mabel, I was bound to get my way."

"I want my way," said the happy girl, with gay defiance, "and I think I shall get it as long as I live."

"Because it will be mine. You see we understand each other, Aunt Marian?"

"Aunt has just seen as much love-making as she can bear for the present. Two have already been here."

Mrs. Vigogne looked at the two with proud eyes. She would have to act up to the character of the benevolent aunt to the end of her days now.

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By E. D. Cuming and J. A. Shepherd.

THE cuckoo has passed from the stage of hoarseness to that of silence and is heard no more. The Live-long-day Popular Concerts are practically over now, for many of the singers are moulting, and they do not feel very well. Individuals who have not begun to change their clothes, the chaffinch, skylark, robin, and others, continue, but it is the aftermath of the concert season, and most of the birds sit about in the shade and gape for air in the stillness of noontide. The snake, either because he feels the heat or because it is time to do so, strips off his coat, now an overcoat, and leaves it lying under some bush, a limp and pallid thing like the ghost of its owner. The snake disrobes very thoroughly, taking off even the old spectacles which are attached to his hood. The viper, who has hatched her eggs in her own body, has her brood round her: very young vipers cannot protect themselves, and there is much reliable evidence to support the belief that, when danger threatens, their mother accommodates them with sanctuary in her own interior, welcoming the giddy young things with open mouth, and imploring them to come in one at a time lest they stick by the way. When she has got the whole dozen on board she writhes away into safety, and calls them up again to inquire how they liked it.

The moorhen looks round on her family, two broods and about fifteen all told, with pardonable pride. Well she may, for the elder children had helped her build the



"The willow-wren has sent her second brood out to face the world."

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second nest she wanted, and as soon as their younger brothers and sisters chipped out they helped feed and look after them. No doubt they also tub and put them to bed and give them swimming lessons. The moorhen's wisdom is not confined to her method of bringing up children; when floods threaten she and her mate have been known to build higher the nest of sedge and flags on the water's edge that the eggs may not get wet. Their besetting sin is love of quarrelling. Moorhens are never on terms of common civility with their neighbours, and forget themselves so far as to kill and eat other people's children.

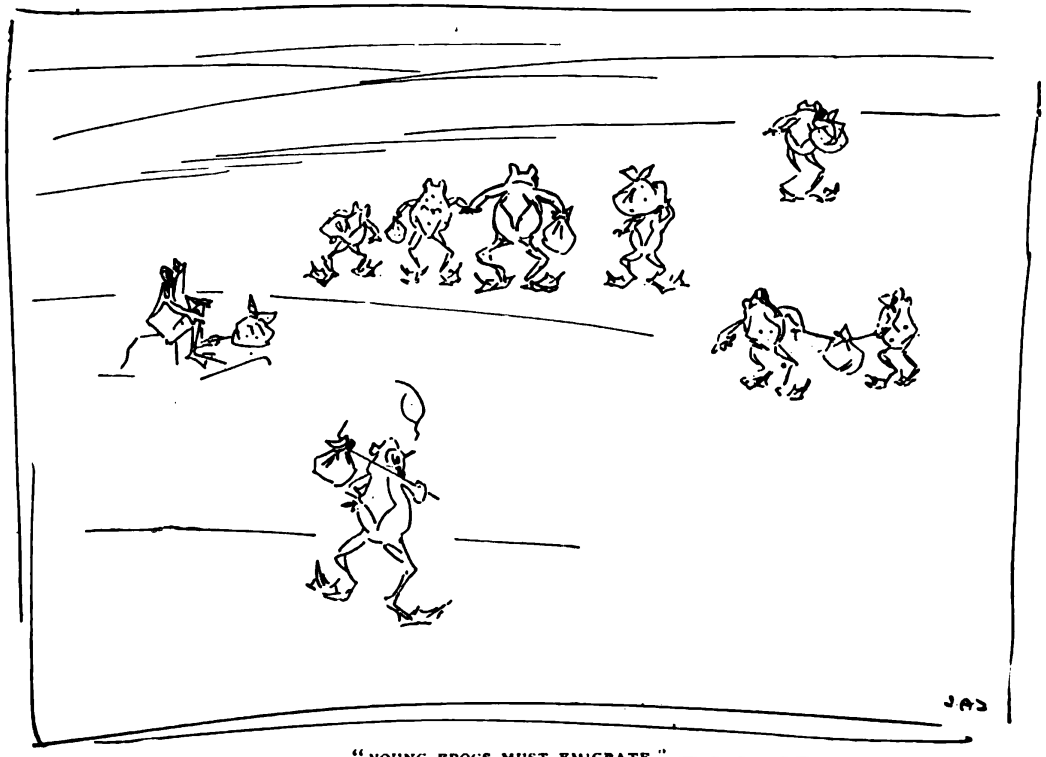
The swan, who has been sitting for five weeks on her eggs, now appears in public with her ugly children. Swans are jealous parents, and show fight if man or dog come near the brood; the young married swan has only three or four cygnets when, at the age of two or three years, she establishes her first nursery; as she grows older she faces family responsibility more boldly and thinks little of rearing ten or a dozen babies.



"ST. KESTREL."

The long-tailed tit's children are sitting in a row on some handy twig, gaping for more like so many fluffy Oliver Twists. If consulted, they would probably have preferred to stay longer in the nest, but that was wanted for the second family, and they had to turn out. The willow-wren has sent her second brood out to face the world, from the little domed nest on the ground. She is nervous and indiscreet when her children are big enough to wander about by themselves, and often tells you where they are by the way she screams to them to come to her for protection. The goldfinch is sitting on her second clutch, and is trying to induce her mate to sing; but he is beginning to tire of singing, as he is apt to do about this time, and will only open his beak when the spirit moves him. Also, the thistles are seeding, and if there is one thing the restless goldfinch enjoys more than another it is to swing on a thistle-top and pick the downy seeds.

The sparrow-hawk has got her four, five,



"YOUNG FROGS MUST EMIGRATE."

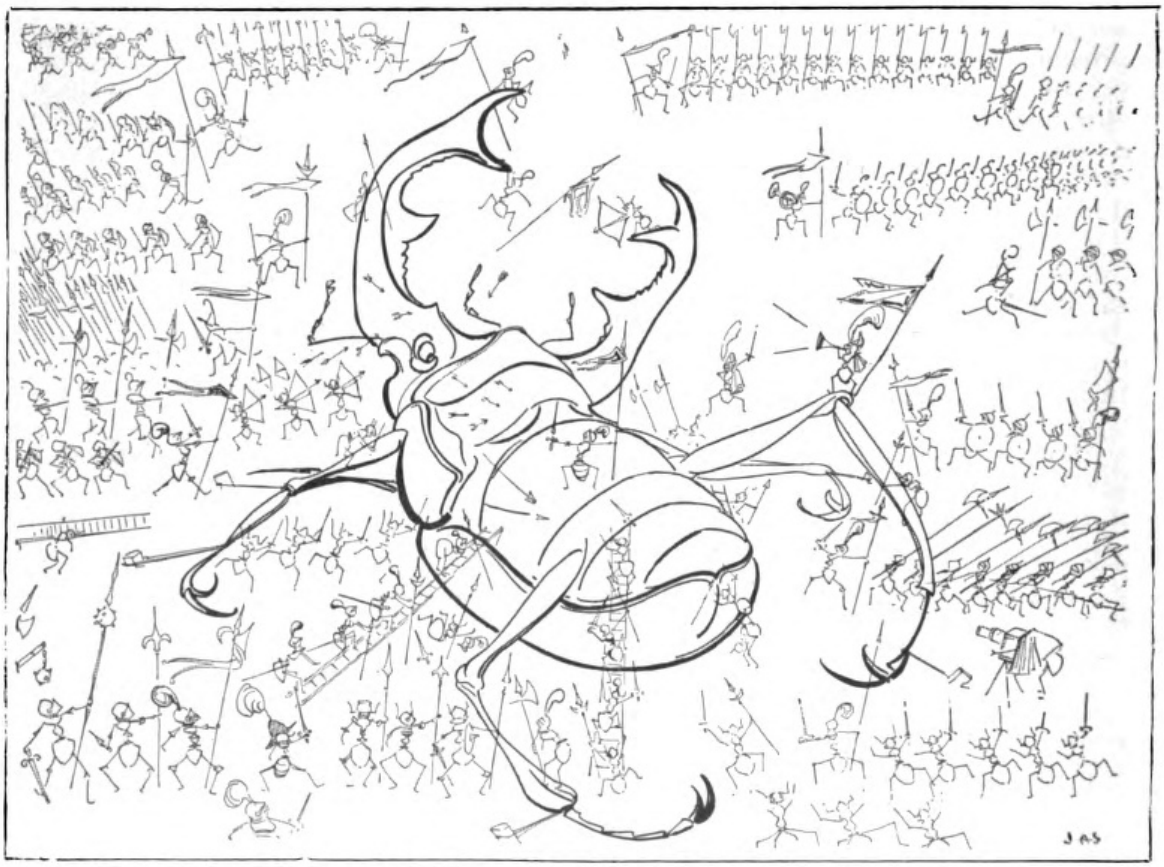
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or six children out of the nest at last. Her nursery duties are particularly tedious, for the eggs take nearly seven weeks to hatch, whereas other birds of her size manage the business in half the time or less. The hungry family perch on the branches and worry their parents, who grow perfectly reckless as to how they fill the larder. They steal chickens from the poultry yard under the henwife's nose and defy the gamekeeper among his pheasant coops when lawful prey, wood-pigeons and the like, is scarce. So bad is

You don't imprison Brown or Jones if Thomson steal a hat,
And when your little dog does wrong you do not beat the cat.
I seldom kill a bird at all ; and, faith, I cannot see
Why, when the sparrow-hawk kills chicks, you come and murder me !

Occasionally a kestrel contracts the evil habit of raiding poultry yard or pheasant field ; but the normal life of this St. Kestrel is more than blameless, if the slaughter of vermin be meritorious.

Mrs. Swift, in the church tower, is educating her children : one of the first things young



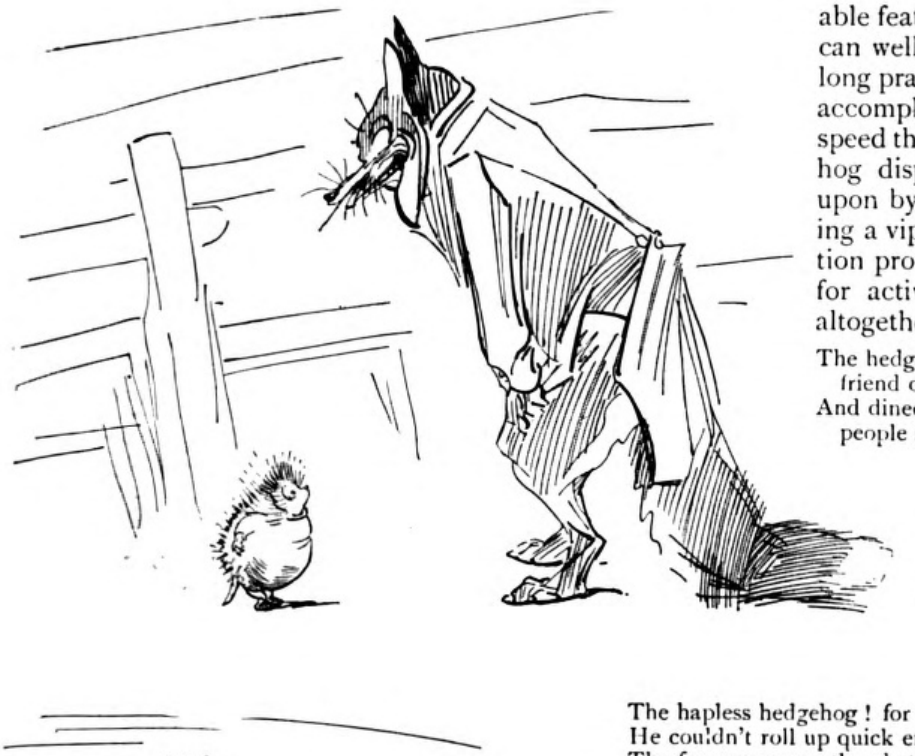
"THE STAG-BEETLE GULLIVER AND THE LILIPUTIAN ANTS."

the character of the sparrow-hawk that other birds bearing the faintest resemblance to him, or to a hawk at all, pay for his sins with their lives. The nearly harmless kestrel, who hangs in mid-air as though suspended from a thread tied to a cloud, is always getting into trouble for the sparrow-hawk's misdeeds :—

A mouse for breakfast, mouse for lunch, for dinner yet a third,
Surely what's virtue in a cat is virtue in a bird ?
When mice are scarce we're all at pains your fields of rats to rid,
And yet you shoot us down at sight for things we never did !

swifts learn is to fire themselves at a velocity of about 500ft. per second into a 3in. hole : this difficult accomplishment, one would think, cannot be acquired without many bumps and bruises. There are stir and bustle down by the horse-pond : the place is over-populated, and young frogs must emigrate and start life somewhere else. It is hard on frogs not out of pinafores and no bigger than a sixpence ; but the emigration season is held glorious by ducks and other fowl, who snap up the little travellers in scores as they toil painfully across the rough and trackless desert—which to us appears to be the high

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"HE MET A FOX."

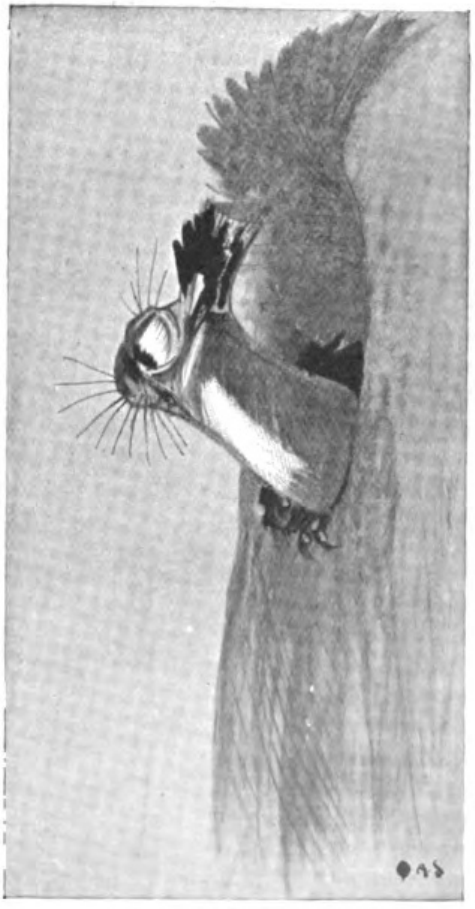
road—in search of the damp ditch which, rumour saith, is on the farther side. The stag-beetle digs his way out of the ground at the root of the oak in the warm evening and sails ponderously off into the world: the cockchafer and little beetles get out of his way and the caterpillars lie still as death, hoping to escape notice, for the stag-beetle is hungry. That lordly creature apparently expects twigs as well as cockchafers to get out of his way, for he is always coming to grief in the lanes: you may find him on his back in the road any morning.

It seems to be a point of honour with the stag-beetle that when he falls he shall fall on his back, and an inverted stag-beetle is as helpless as a "turned turtle." There he lies feebly clawing the air until the ants find him out—which they are sure to do soon—and when that happens his moments are numbered. Surrounding him in crowds, as the Liliputians swarmed round and over Gulliver, they treat the fallen beetle less considerately than the little folk treated that hero; in brief, they set to work and take him to pieces without waiting for him to die.

The hedgehog's children are abroad now, peering furtively about into the dusk. The young hedgehog is defenceless, for his spines are merely stiff hairs, and he can trot about and enjoy himself long before he can roll into a ball. He learns to perform this indispensable feat in time, but, as you can well suppose, it requires long practice before it can be accomplished at the lightning speed the experienced hedgehog displays when pounced upon by a fox or when fighting a viper. A state of repletion probably does not make for activity, so this is not altogether a fancy picture:—

The hedgehog's boy dined with a friend one day,
And dined too well—not wisely: people say,
Young hedgehogs are a little prone that way.
Well, coming home across the field that night
He met a fox and tried to roll up tight,
That prickly spines should baffle cunning might.
The hapless hedgehog! for the nonce too stout,
He couldn't roll up quick enough: no doubt
The fox saw promptly what he'd been about
And turned him upside down and inside out.

The squirrels have begun their children's



"ABUSE."

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"QUIET MEDITATION."

education, which includes athletics, birds'-nesting, and scolding in all their respective branches. The squirrel is an unprincipled fellow: he thinks nothing of stealing the eggs of birds as big as the wood-pigeon, and occasionally adds insult to injury by eating them in the nest and omitting to clean the place up afterwards. He has been known to stoop to the worse depravity of catching young birds and eating them; but this conduct, be it said for the credit of the species, is not usual. Concerning trespassers he and his wife hold strong opinions, which they express with enviable fluency when their children are about. The squirrel's vocabulary of abuse is extensive, and, when roused, a mere boy squirrel can put a bargeman to shame. The young badgers are allowed to go out in the evening now and romp, somewhat ponderously, with their indulgent parents. Romping is not much in the middle-aged badger's line; he prefers quiet meditation, and meditates at great length when leisure permits. Neither he nor his wife has much time for it just at present: new beds have to be made, and the badger's bed is no trifle. He has a singularly ungraceful way of carrying in litter: he collects a heap of dry bracken and grass, or straw if available; throws himself over it and backs homewards, hugging the stuff under him with his arms. It is an undignified proceeding for the scion of an old county family, but he works at night, careless what the fox, owls, and bats think of him.

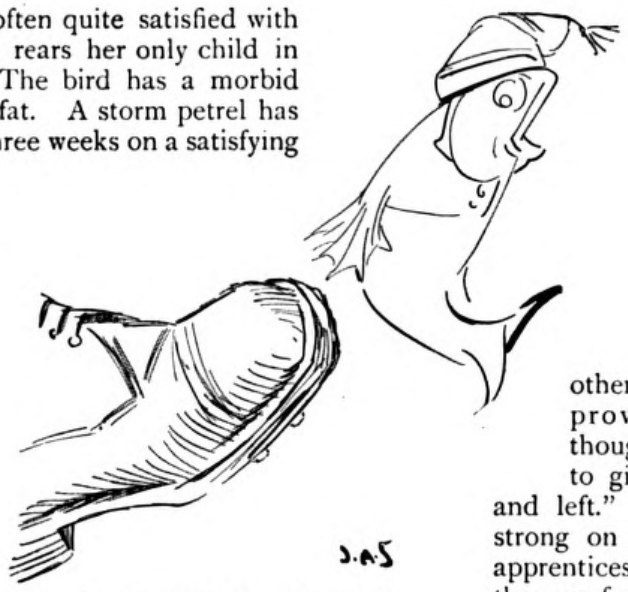
The storm petrel, a bird whose name is known to everybody if her person be familiar to few, has now hatched out her single egg. Sometimes the storm petrel, who assembles in a colony for breeding, makes a sketchy sort of nest in a



"A POOR CATERER."

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burrow, but she is often quite satisfied with the bare ground and rears her only child in Spartan simplicity. The bird has a morbid passion for anything fat. A storm petrel has been kept alive for three weeks on a satisfying diet of oil; presumably a young one would accept a tallow candle in the spirit of fervid gratitude a child displays towards a stick of sugar-candy. The guillemot's children are by this time old enough to be launched—literally speaking—and their parents bring them down from the rock-ledges on their backs. Sometimes the old bird brings down the infant by the scruff of the neck, but probably she adopts this drastic treatment only if he refuse to climb on her back. It must be said, in justification of the young guillemot, that the descent from rock-ledge to sea on the maternal back is a trip fraught with peril, as the most careful parent cannot help dropping her child occasionally. The gannet's egg has yielded a naked, black, unlovely monster with an insatiable appetite for fish. An author afflicted with statistical tastes calculated that the gannets on St. Kilda, estimated at 200,000 birds, ate 214,000,000 herrings in seven months. He allowed each bird five herrings a day — an allowance which in practical application would certainly have secured his summary dismissal as caterer. Gannets are enormous eaters, and when a shoal of herrings offers opportunity gorge themselves till they cannot rise from the water.



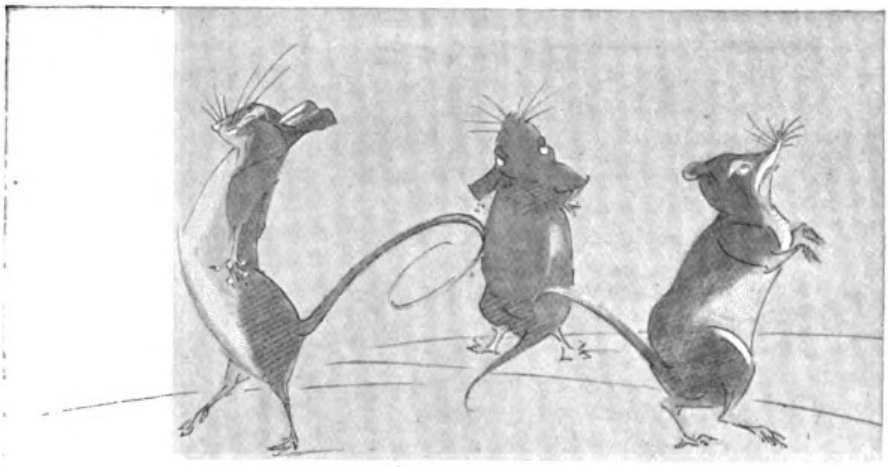
"DISCHARGED WITH A CAUTION."

The young grouse can fly well now; family affection or self-interest keeps the brood together, as it does in the case of some other birds: a beautiful provision of Nature, a thoughtful sportsman said, to give you a nice "right and left." Pheasant chicks are strong on the leg if still mere apprentices in the art of flying; they prefer to hide rather than try and escape by running. The young pheasant labours under the delusion that if it squat down and stretch out its neck it becomes invisible; amid favourable surroundings it may be overlooked, but a chick doing this in the open field looks foolish. The rabbit, by the way, cherishes the same mistaken theory in his innocent youth, and does not always outgrow it. The young partridges can fly, too, and thus relieve their affectionate parents of the necessity — doubtless painful to conscientious birds— of shamming lameness to draw off man or other enemy who may venture near the covey. The partridge is a child in artifice compared to the wild duck, who is a past-master in the arts of deception. Father and mother sham broken legs and wings as though the tricks were just patented, instead of having been practised ever since wild duck's enemies were created.



"NEW CLOTHES."

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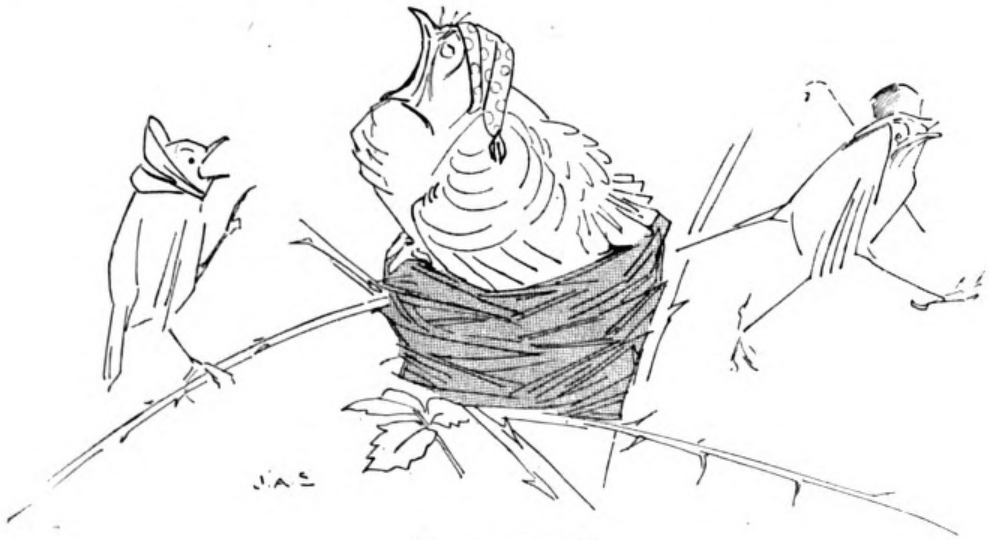


"NOT ON SQUEAKING TERMS."

There are plenty of infant salmon abroad—far more than any trout fisherman wants—for the parr's curiosity concerning trout-flies is insatiable, and he takes flies not meant for him with the recklessness of a creature who knows he will be discharged, under the First Offenders' Act, with a pricked lip by way of caution. Salmon ova hatch out in from thirty-five to 148 days, according to the temperature of the water: cold means delay and warmth expedition. That is a lucky parr who reaches full-blown salmonhood: it is reckoned that four or five fish reach salmon's estate out of every 30,000 eggs laid. The salmon rejoices in a wealth of names applicable to stage of growth, condition, and sex; I have counted forty-two without including any of those names you call him when he won't rise.

The toad changes his clothes; he does not, like the snake, risk outraging the sense of propriety of chance passers-by stripping in the open: he retires to the privacy of his underground dressing-room and disrobes there. First he rubs his sides down with his elbows till his coat splits down the back; then, wishing no doubt it was made to unbutton in front, he rubs it into folds on his sides, when with his right hand he draws the left side clear, and *vice versâ*, so that it hangs like a bib. He draws off his pants, leg by leg, exactly as a man would do, and strips off his sleeves—eating each garment as he takes it off—and stands up newly clad from top to toe, perfectly happy and pleased with himself, as why should he not be?

Give me the clo's a fellow grows
With Nature's kindly aid.
No tailor woes; one always knows
They will be nicely made.



"A MUSIC LESSON"

However wet your things may get,
Their shape they never lose;
No fellow yet I ever met
Lacked smartness in his shoes.

Dytiscus, passed through the various stages of existence, egg, larva, and pupa, has

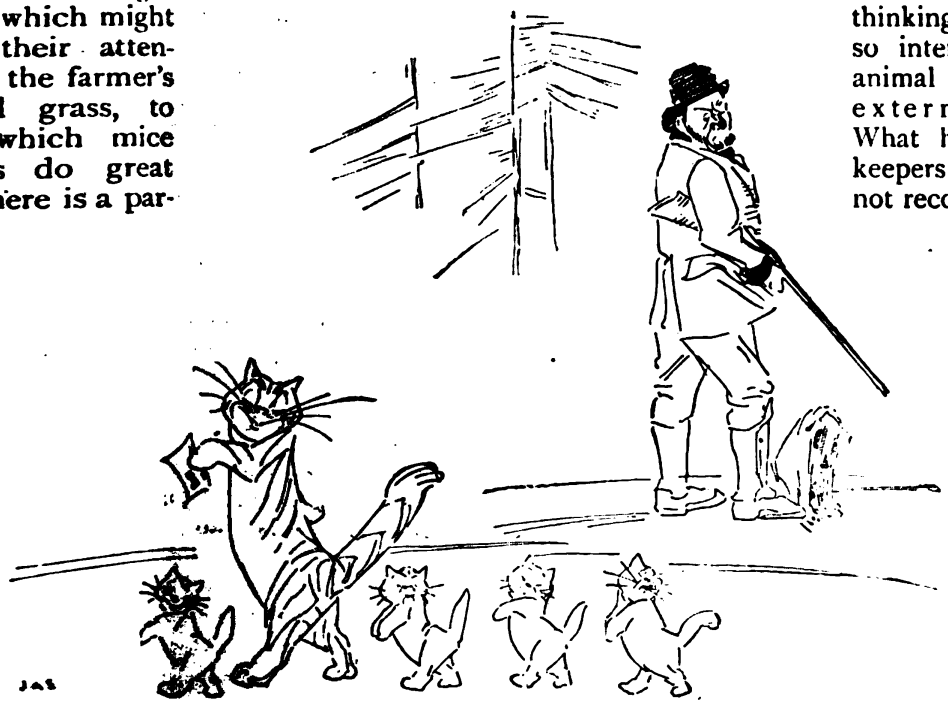
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emerged from the underground cell wherein he underwent his final transformation, a fully equipped water-beetle. Dytiscus is one of the champion oarsmen of the insect world; he rows with his hind legs, which are flattened and furnished along the lower edge with stiff hairs, and a neat arrangement of joints enables him to "feather" his oars in the fashion approved by rowing men. Hydrophilus, the great water-beetle, is a very poor oarsman compared with his smaller cousin: he does not even attempt to keep time; feeding as he does chiefly on vegetable matter, it is less necessary for him to excel. Dytiscus catches other insects, some of which require chasing, so necessity has made him a professional, while hydrophilus remains a contented and indifferent amateur.

The wood-pigeons are nursing their second pair of twins, and so are the turtle-doves, if they have decided to rear two families this season, which is not always the case. Some young birds, the robins for instance, are trying to sing—to the gratification of their proud parents, who do not, so far as human knowledge goes, give them any education in harmony: imagine a hedge-sparrow trying to teach a young cuckoo his notes! Young field-mice, field-voles, and shrews of all ages of indiscretion from a month upwards are abroad in numbers. These animals are not on squeaking terms with one another: a pity, as the youthful mice and voles are fond of play, and in every field there are enough of them to get up games which might distract their attention from the farmer's corn and grass, to both of which mice and voles do great harm. There is a particularly big black mark in the agriculturist's calendar against the field-vole; from time to time he arises in the might of numbers, multiplying with incredible rapidity, and bringing ruin to whole parishes. The Roxburghshire farmers will not soon forget the "vole plague" of 1892–3, when a succession of dry springs and summers induced every vole in the country to marry young, bring up one family after another, and marry their sons and daughters off in feverish haste. Over a district of 90,000 acres or more, grazing and crops in turn were destroyed.

The wild cat's young family, reared largely on stolen game, is out on the trail. The study of the wild cat is fraught with vexation to the scientific man; that noble animal (the cat, I mean), for his sins, has been as nearly exterminated as game preservation can accomplish it; but the bond between the true wild cat and frail domestic cat is close. If the home-bred cat go to the woods she remains there, lending willing ear to the addresses of a cat with wild blood in his veins, or to those of an outlaw like herself. Her progeny, in a generation or two, take upon them the outward and inward semblance of the wild cat; and of such a forest-bred cat no man may say her grandmother was of blameless antecedents or was born and bred a proscribed bandit.

The late Duke of Westminster, a naturalist at heart, preserved the few true wild cats left on Reay Forest, thinking it a pity so interesting an animal should be exterminated. What his Grace's keepers thought is not recorded.



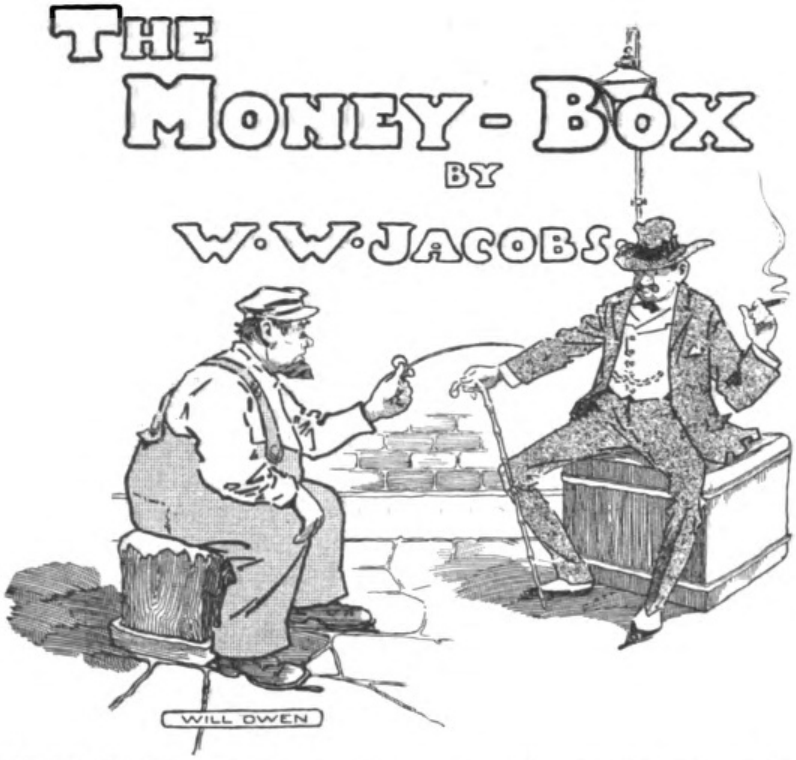
"FREE OF THE FOREST."

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THE MONEY-BOX

BY

W. W. JACOBS



SAILORMEN are not good 'ands at saving money as a rule, said the night-watchman, as he wistfully toyed with a bad shilling on his watch-chain, though to 'ear 'em talk of saving when they're at sea and there isn't a pub within a thousand miles of 'em, you might think different.

It ain't for the want of trying either with some of 'em, and I've known men do all sorts o' things as soon as they was paid off, with a view to saving. I knew one man as used to keep all but a shilling or two in a belt next to 'is skin so that he couldn't get at it easy, but it was all no good. He was always running short in the most inconvenient places. I've seen 'im wriggle for five minutes right off, with a tramcar conductor standing over 'im and the other people in the tram reading their papers with one eye and watching him with the other.

Ginger Dick and Peter Russet—two men I've spoke of to you afore—tried to save their money once. They'd got so sick and tired of spending it all in p'r'aps a week or ten days arter coming ashore, and 'aving to go to sea agin sooner than they 'ad intended, that they determined some way or other to 'ave things different.

They was homeward bound on a steamer from Melbourne when they made their minds up; and Isaac Lunn, the oldest fireman aboard — a very steady old teetotaler —gave them a lot of good advice about it. They all wanted to rejoin the ship when she sailed agin, and 'e offered to take a room ashore with them and mind their money, giving 'em what 'e called a moderate amount each day.

They would ha' laughed at any other man, but they knew that old Isaac was as honest as could be and that their money would be safe with 'im, and at last, after a lot of palaver, they wrote out a paper saying as they were willing for 'im to 'ave their money and give it to 'em bit by bit, till they went to sea agin.

Anybody but Ginger Dick and Peter Russet or a fool would ha' known better than to do such a thing, but old Isaac 'ad got such a oily tongue and seemed so fair-minded about wot 'e called moderate drinking that they never thought wot they was letting themselves in for, and when they took their pay—close on sixteen pounds each—they put the odd change in their pockets and 'anded the rest over to him.

The first day they was as pleased as Punch. Old Isaac got a nice, respectable bedroom for them all, and arter they'd 'ad a few drinks they humored 'im by 'aving a nice 'ot cup o' tea, and then goin' off with 'im to see a magic-lantern performance.

It was called "The Drunkard's Downfall," and it begun with a young man going into a nice-looking pub and being served by a nice-looking barmaid with a glass of ale.

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Then it got on to 'arf pints and pints in the next picture, and arter Ginger 'ad seen the lost young man put away six pints in about 'arf a minute, 'e got such a raging thirst on 'im that 'e couldn't sit still, and 'e whispered to Peter Russet to go out with 'im.

"You'll lose the best of it if you go now," ses old Isaac, in a whisper; "in the next picture there's little frogs and devils sitting on the edge of the pot as 'e goes to drink."

Ginger Dick got up and nodded to Peter.

"Arter that 'e kills 'is mother with a razor," ses old Isaac, pleading with 'im and 'olding on to 'is coat.

Ginger Dick sat down agin, and when the murder was over 'e said it made 'im feel faint, and 'im and Peter Russet went out for a breath of fresh air. They 'ad three at the first place, and then they moved on to another and forgot all about Isaac and the dissolving views until ten o'clock, when Ginger, who 'ad been very liberal to some friends 'e'd made in a pub, found 'e'd spent 'is last penny.

"This comes o' listening to a parcel o' teetotalers," 'e ses, very cross, when 'e found that Peter 'ad spent all 'is money too. "Here we are just beginning the evening and not a farthing in our pockets."

They went off 'ome in a very bad temper. Old Isaac was asleep in 'is bed, and when they woke 'im up and said that they was going to take charge of their money themselves 'e kept dropping off to sleep agin and snoring that 'ard they could scarcely hear themselves speak. Then Peter tipped Ginger a wink and pointed to Isaac's trousers, which were 'anging over the foot of the bed.

Ginger Dick smiled and took 'em up softly, and Peter Russet smiled too; but 'e wasn't best pleased to see old Isaac a-smiling in 'is sleep, as though 'e was 'aving amusing dreams. All Ginger found was a ha'penny, a bunch o' keys, and a cough lozenge. In the coat and waistcoat 'e found a few tracks folded up, a broken pen-knife, a ball of string, and some other rubbish. Then 'e set down on the foot o' their bed and made eyes over at Peter.

"Wake 'im up agin," ses Peter, in a temper.

Ginger Dick got up and, leaning over the bed, took old Isaac by the shoulders and shook 'im as if 'e'd been a bottle o' medicine.

"Time to get up, lads?" ses old Isaac, putting one leg out o' bed.

"No, it ain't," ses Ginger, very rough; "we ain't been to bed yet. We want our money back."

Isaac drew 'is leg back into bed agin. "Goo' night," he ses, and fell fast asleep.

"He's shamming, that's wot 'e is," ses Peter Russet. "Let's look for it. It must be in the room somewhere."

They turned the room upside down pretty near, and then Ginger Dick struck a match and looked up the chimney, but all 'e found was that it 'adn't been swept for about twenty years, and wot with temper and soot 'e looked so frightful that Peter was arf afraid of 'im.

"I've 'ad enough of this," ses Ginger, running up to the bed and 'olding his sooty fist under old Isaac's nose. "Now, then, where's that money? If you don't give us our money, our 'ard-earned money, inside o' two minutes, I'll break every bone in your body."

"This is wot comes o' trying to do you a favour, Ginger," ses the old man, reproachfully.

"Don't talk to me," ses Ginger, "cos I won't have it. Come on; where is it?"

Old Isaac looked at 'im, and then he gave a sigh and got up and put on 'is boots and 'is trousers.

"I thought I should 'ave a little trouble with you," he ses, slowly, "but I was prepared for that."

"You'll 'ave more if you don't hurry up," ses Ginger, glaring at 'im.

"We don't want to 'urt you, Isaac," ses Peter Russet, "we on'y want our money."

"I know that," ses Isaac; "you keep still, Peter and see fair-play, and I'll knock you silly arterwards."

He pushed some o' the things into a corner and then 'e spat on 'is 'ands, and began to prance up and down, and duck 'is 'ead about and hit the air in a way that surprised 'em.

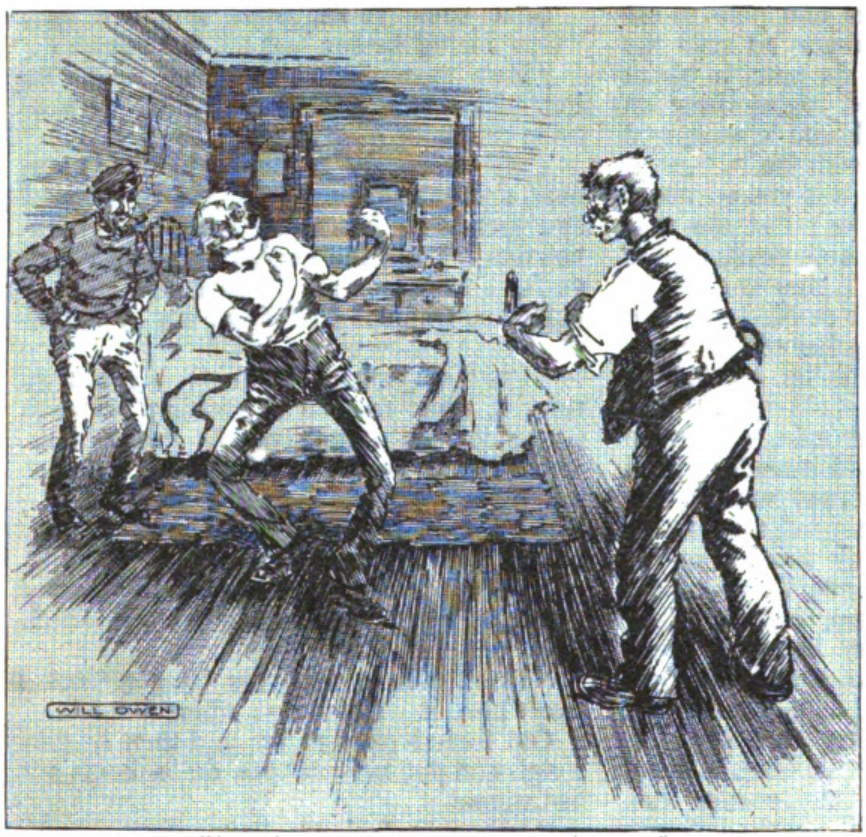
"I ain't hit a man for five years," 'e ses, still dancing up and down—"fighting's sinful except in a good cause—but afore I got a new 'art, Ginger, I'd lick three men like you afore breakfast, just to git up a appetite."

"Look 'ere," ses Ginger; "you're an old man and I don't want to 'urt you; tell us where our money is, our 'ard-earned money, and I won't lay a finger on you."

"I'm taking care of it for you," ses the old man.

Ginger Dick gave a howl and rushed at him, and the next moment Isaac's fist shot out and give 'im a drive that sent 'im spinning across the room until 'e fell in a heap in the fireplace. It was like a kick from a 'orse, and Peter looked very serious as 'e picked 'im up and dusted 'im down.

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"'I AIN'T HIT A MAN FOR FIVE YEARS,' HE SES."

"You should keep your eye on 'is fist," he ses, sharply.

It was a silly thing to say, seeing that that was just wot 'ad 'appened, and Ginger told 'im wot 'e'd do for 'im when 'e'd finished with Isaac. He went at the old man agin, but 'e never 'ad a chance, and in about three minutes 'e was very glad to let Peter 'elp 'im into bed.

"It's your turn to fight him now, Peter," he ses. "Just move this piller so as I can see."

"Come on, lad," ses the old man.

Peter shook 'is 'ead. "I have no wish to 'urt you, Isaac," he ses, kindly; "excitement like fighting is dangerous for an old man. Give us our money and we'll say no more about it."

"No, my lads," ses Isaac. "I've undertook to take charge o' this money and I'm going to do it; and I 'ope that when we all sign on aboard the *Planet* there'll be a matter o' twelve pounds each left. Now, I don't want to be 'arsh with you, but I'm going back to bed, and if I 'ave to get up and dress agin you'll wish yourselves dead."

He went back to bed agin, and Peter, taking no notice of Ginger Dick, who kept calling 'im a coward, got into bed alongside of Ginger and fell fast asleep.

They all 'ad breakfast in a coffee-shop next morning, and arter it was over Ginger, who 'adn't spoke a word till then, said that 'e and Peter Russet wanted a little money to go on with. He said they preferred to get their meals alone, as Isaac's face took their appetite away.

"Very good," ses the old man. "I don't want to force my company on nobody," and after thinking 'ard for a minute or two he put 'is 'and in 'is trouser-pocket and gave them eighteenpence each.

"Wot's this for?" ses Ginger, staring at the money. "Matches?"

"That's your day's allowance," ses Isaac, "and it's plenty. There's ninepence for your dinner, fourpence for your tea, and twopence for a crust o' bread and cheese for supper. And if you must go and drown yourselves in beer, that leaves threepence each to go and do it with."

Ginger tried to speak to 'im, but 'is feelings was too much for 'im, and 'e couldn't. Then Peter Russet swallered something 'e was going to say and asked old Isaac very perlite to make it a quid for *'im* because he was going down to Colchester to see 'is mother, and 'e didn't want to go empty-'anded.

"You're a good son, Peter," ses old Isaac, "and I wish there was more like you. I'll come down with you, if you like; I've got nothing to do."

Peter said it was very kind of 'im, but 'e'd sooner go alone, owing to his mother being very shy afore strangers.

"Well, I'll come down to the station and take a ticket for you," ses Isaac.

Then Peter lost 'is temper altogether, and banged 'is fist on the table and smashed 'arf the crockery. He asked Isaac whether 'e thought 'im and Ginger Dick was a couple o' children, and 'e said if 'e didn't give 'em all their money right away 'e'd give 'im in charge to the first policeman they met.

"I'm afraid you didn't intend for to go

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"'WOT'S THIS FOR?' SES GINGER."

and see your mother, Peter," ses the old man.

"Look 'ere," ses Peter, "are you going to give us that money?"

"Not if you went down on your bended knees," ses the old man.

"Very good," says Peter, getting up and walking outside; "then come along o' me to find a policeman."

"I'm agreeable," ses Isaac, "but I've got the paper you signed."

Peter said 'e didn't care twopence if 'e'd got fifty papers, and they walked along looking for a policeman, which was a very unusual thing for them to do.

"I 'ope for your sakes it won't be the same policeman that you and Ginger Dick set on in Gun Alley the night afore you shipped on the *Planet*," ses Isaac, pursing up 'is lips.

"'Tain't likely to be," ses Peter, beginning to wish 'e 'adn't been so free with 'is tongue.

"Still, if I tell 'im, I dessay he'll soon find 'im," ses Isaac; "there's one coming along now, Peter; shall I stop 'im?"

Peter Russet looked at 'im and then he looked at Ginger, and they walked by grinding their teeth. They stuck to Isaac all day, trying to get their money out of 'im, and the names they called 'im was a surprise even to themselves. And at night they turned the room topsy-turvy agin looking for their money and 'ad more unpleasantness when they wanted Isaac to get up and let 'em search the bed.

They 'ad breakfast together agin next morning and Ginger tried another tack. He spoke quite nice to Isaac, and 'ad three large cups o' tea to show 'im 'ow 'e was beginning to like it, and when the old man gave 'em their eighteen-pences 'e smiled and said 'e'd like a few shillings extra that day.

"It'll be all right, Isaac," he ses. "I wouldn't 'ave a drink if you asked me to. Don't seem to care for it now. I was saying so to you on'y last night, wasn't I, Peter?"

"You was," ses Peter; "so was I."

"Then I've done you good, Ginger," ses Isaac, clapping 'im on the back.

"You 'ave," ses Ginger, speaking between his teeth, "and I thank you for it. I don't want drink; but I thought o' going to a music-'all this evening."

"Going to a *wot?*" ses old Isaac, drawing 'imself up and looking very shocked.

"A music-'all," ses Ginger, trying to keep 'is temper.

"A music-'all?" ses Isaac; "why, it's worse than a pub, Ginger. I should be a very poor

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friend o' yours if I let you go there—I couldn't think of it."

"Wot's it got to do with you, you grey-whiskered serpent?" screams Ginger, arf mad with rage. "Why don't you leave us alone? Why don't you mind your own business? It's our money."

Isaac tried to talk to 'im, but 'e wouldn't listen, and he made such a fuss that at last the coffee-shop keeper told 'im to go outside. Peter follered 'im out, and being very upset they went and spent their day's allowance in the first hour, and then they walked about the streets quarrelling as to the death they'd like old Isaac to 'ave when 'is time came.

They went back to their lodgings at dinner-time; but there was no sign of the old man, and, being 'ungry and thirsty, they took all their spare clothes to a pawnbroker and got enough money to go on with. Just to show their independence they went to two music-'alls, and with a sort of idea that they was doing Isaac a bad turn they spent every farthing afore they got 'ome, and sat up in bed telling 'im about the spree they'd 'ad.

At five o'clock in the morning Peter woke up and saw, to 'is surprise, that Ginger Dick was dressed and carefully folding up old Isaac's clothes. At first 'e thought that Ginger 'ad gone mad, taking care of the old man's things like that, but afore 'e could speak Ginger noticed that 'e was awake, and stepped over to 'im and whispered to 'im to dress without making a noise. Peter did as 'e was told, and, more puzzled than ever, saw Ginger make up all the old man's clothes in a bundle and creep out of the room on tiptoe.

"Going to 'ide 'is clothes?" 'e ses.

"Yes," ses Ginger, leading the way downstairs; "in a pawnshop. We'll make the old man pay for to-day's amusements."

Then Peter see the joke and 'e begun to laugh so 'ard that Ginger 'ad to threaten to knock 'is head off to quiet 'im. Ginger laughed 'imself when they got outside, and at last, arter walking about till the shops opened, they got into a pawnbroker's and put old Isaac's clothes up for fifteen shillings.

First thing they did was to 'ave a good breakfast, and after that they came out smiling all over and began to spend a 'appy day. Ginger was in tip-top spirits and so was Peter, and the idea that old Isaac was in bed while they was drinking 'is clothes pleased them more than anything. Twice that evening policemen spoke to Ginger for dancing on the pavement, and by the time the money was spent it took Peter all 'is time to get 'im 'ome.



"THEY PUT OLD ISAAC'S CLOTHES UP FOR FIFTEEN SHILLINGS."

Old Isaac was in bed when they got there, and the temper 'e was in was shocking; but Ginger sat on 'is bed and smiled at 'im as if 'e was saying compliments to 'im.

"Where's my clothes?" ses the old man, shaking 'is fist at the two of 'em.

Ginger smiled at 'im; then 'e shut 'is eyes and dropped off to sleep.

"Where's my clothes?" ses Isaac, turning to Peter.

"Closhe?" ses Peter, staring at 'im.

"Where are they?" ses Isaac.

It was a long time afore Peter could understand wot 'e meant, but as soon as 'e did 'e started to look for 'em. Drink takes people in different ways, and the way it always took

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Peter was to make 'im one o' the most obliging men that ever lived. He spent arf the night crawling about on all fours looking for the clothes, and four or five times old Isaac woke up from dreams of earthquakes to find Peter 'ad got jammed under 'is bed, and was wondering what 'ad 'appened to 'im.

None of 'em was in the best o' tempers when they woke up next morning, and Ginger 'ad 'ardly got 'is eyes open before Isaac was asking 'im about 'is clothes agin.

"Don't bother me about your clothes," ses Ginger; "talk about something else for a change."

"Where are they?" ses Isaac, sitting on the edge of 'is bed.

Ginger yawned and felt in 'is waistcoat pocket—for neither of 'em 'ad undressed—and then 'e took the pawn-ticket out and threw it on the floor. Isaac picked it up, and then 'e began to dance about the room as if 'e'd gone mad.

"Do you mean to tell me you've pawned my clothes?" he shouts.

"Me and Peter did," ses Ginger, sitting up in bed and getting ready for a row.

Isaac dropped on the bed agin all of a 'eap. "And wot am I to do?" he ses.

"If you be'ave yourself," ses Ginger, "and give us our money, me and Peter'll go and get 'em out agin. When we've 'ad breakfast, that is. There's no hurry."

"But I 'aven't got the money," ses Isaac; "it was all sewn up in the lining of the coat. I've on'y got about five shillings. You've made a nice mess of it, Ginger, you 'ave."

"You're a silly fool, Ginger, that's wot you are," ses Peter.

"*Sewn up in the lining of the coat?*" ses Ginger, staring.

"The bank-notes was," ses Isaac, "and three pounds in gold 'idden in the cap. Did you pawn that too?"

Ginger got up in 'is excitement and walked up and down the room. "We must go and get 'em out at once," he ses.

"And where's the money to do it with?" ses Peter.

Ginger 'adn't thought of that, and it struck 'im all of a heap. None of 'em seemed to be able to think of a way of getting the other ten shillings wot was wanted, and Ginger was so upset that 'e took no notice of the things Peter kept saying to 'im.

"Let's go and ask to see 'em, and say we left a railway-ticket in the pocket," ses Peter.

Isaac shook 'is 'ead. "There's on'y one way to do it," he ses. "We shall 'ave to pawn your clothes, Ginger, to get mine out with."

"That's the on'y way, Ginger," ses Peter, brightening up. "Now, wot's the good o' carrying on like that? It's no worse for you to be without your clothes for a little while than it was for pore old Isaac."

It took 'em quite arf an hour afore they could get Ginger to see it. First of all 'e wanted Peter's clothes to be took instead of 'is, and when Peter pointed out that they was too shabby to fetch ten shillings 'e 'ad a lot o' nasty things to say about wearing such old rags, and at last, in a terrible temper, 'e took 'is clothes off and pitched 'em in a 'eap on the floor.

"If you ain't back in arf an hour, Peter," 'e ses, scowling at 'im, "you'll 'ear from me, I can tell you."

"Don't you worry about that," ses Isaac, with a smile. "*I'm* going to take 'em."

"You?" ses Ginger; "but you can't. You ain't got no clothes."

"I'm going to wear Peter's," ses Isaac, with a smile.

Peter asked 'im to listen to reason, but it was all no good. He'd got the pawn-ticket, and at last Peter, forgetting all he'd said to Ginger Dick about using bad langwidge, took 'is clothes off, one by one, and dashed 'em on the floor, and told Isaac some of the things 'e thought of 'im.

The old man didn't take any notice of 'im. He dressed 'imself up very slow and careful in Peter's clothes, and then 'e drove 'em nearly crazy by wasting time making 'is bed.

"Be as quick as you can, Isaac," ses Ginger, at last; "think of us two a-sitting 'ere waiting for you."

"I sha'n't forget it," ses Isaac, and 'e came back to the door after 'e'd gone arf-way down the stairs to ask 'em not to go out on the drink while 'e was away.

It was nine o'clock when he went, and at ha'-past nine Ginger began to get impatient and wondered wot 'ad 'appened to 'im, and when ten o'clock came and no Isaac they was both leaning out of the winder with blankets over their shoulders looking up the road. By eleven o'clock Peter was in very low spirits and Ginger was so mad 'e was afraid to speak to 'im.

They spent the rest o' that day 'anging out of the winder, but it was not till ha'-past four in the afternoon that Isaac, still wearing Peter's clothes and carrying a couple of large green plants under 'is arm, turned into the road, and from the way 'e was smiling they thought it must be all right.

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"Wot 'ave you been such a long time for?" ses Ginger, in a low, fierce voice, as Isaac stopped underneath the winder and nodded up to 'em.

"I met a old friend," ses Isaac.

"Met a old friend?" ses Ginger, in a passion. "Wot d'ye mean, wasting time like that while we was sitting up 'ere waiting and starving?"

"I 'adn't seen 'im for years," ses Isaac, "and time slipped away afore I noticed it."

"I dessay," ses Ginger, in a bitter voice. "Well, is the money all right?"

"I don't know," ses Isaac; "I ain't got the clothes."

"*Wot?*" ses Ginger, nearly falling out of the winder. "Well, wot 'ave you done with mine, then? Where are they? Come upstairs."

"I won't come upstairs, Ginger," ses Isaac, "because I'm not quite sure whether I've done right. But I'm not used to going into pawnshops, and I walked about trying to make up my mind to go in and couldn't."

"Well, wot did you do then?" ses Ginger, 'ardly able to contain hisself.

"While I was trying to make up my mind," ses old Isaac, "I see a man with a barrer of lovely plants. 'E wasn t asking money for 'em, only old clothes."

"*Old clothes?*" ses Ginger, in a voice as if 'e was being suffocated.

"I thought they'd be a bit o' green for you to look at," ses the old man, 'olding the plants up; "there's no knowing 'ow long you'll be up there. The big one is yours, Ginger, and the other is for Peter."

"'Ave you gone mad, Isaac?" ses Peter, in a trembling voice, arter Ginger 'ad tried to speak and couldn't.

Isaac shook 'is 'ead and smiled up at 'em, and then, arter telling Peter to put Ginger's blanket a little more round 'is shoulders, for fear 'e should catch cold, 'e said 'e'd ask the landlady to send 'em up some bread and butter and a cup o' tea.

They 'eard 'im talking to the landlady at the door, and then 'e went off in a hurry without looking behind 'im, and the landlady walked up and down on the other side of the road with 'er apron stuffed in 'er mouth, pretending to be looking at 'er chimney-pots.



"OLD ISAAC KEPT 'EM THERE FOR THREE DAYS."

Isaac didn't turn up at all that night, and by next morning those two unfortunate men see 'ow they'd been done. It was quite plain to them that Isaac 'ad been deceiving them, and Peter was pretty certain that 'e took the money out of the bed while 'e was fussing about making it. Old Isaac kept 'em there for three days, sending 'em in their clothes bit by bit and two shillings a day to live on; but they didn't set eyes on 'im agin until they all signed on aboard the *Planet*, and they didn't set eyes on their money until they was two miles below Gravesend.

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By Way of Autobiography.

By C. B. Fry.

[The following article has been written "by special request." Mr. Fry's reluctance to talk about the great part which he has taken in cricket, football, and athletics was difficult to overcome, but our readers will be delighted that he has yielded to persuasion.]

MY earliest recollections of athletics have to do with high jumping. At the age of about six, learning that an uncle of mine could jump nearly 6ft. and could certainly clear with ease the big gate at the bottom of the carriage-drive, I was fired with a spirit of emulation, and constructed a high-jumping apparatus with some long canes, which I prigged out of the greenhouse. I practised a lot, but the only thing I can remember about it is that I discovered I could jump much higher with bare feet than with my boots on. Somewhere about this time I won the open high jump for boys at a Sunday-school treat at Orpington, in Kent, where we then lived. The prize was withheld from me because I did not belong to the Sunday-school; in fact, I had no right whatever to compete. Nevertheless, I won the event. I can remember taking the same sort of run and jumping in exactly the same kind of way as I did many years afterwards at Oxford. About then I made my first acquaintance with cricket. Next door to us at Orpington lived a gentleman named Mr. Oliver Evans, brother of Sir Francis Evans, M.P. He had turned his tennis-lawn into a cricket pitch, with high netting all round it, and there he used to practise with Mr. Allen, son of the well-known publisher of Ruskin's books, who was our neighbour on the other side. These two gentlemen were the principal players of the local clubs at Orpington and St. Mary Cray, and I had an intense admiration for their prowess. I used to watch them at their practice over a thick quick-set hedge. One day after they had finished they invited me to come and have a few balls. My heart bounded to the skies, and I crept through a very small hole at the bottom of the hedge and enjoyed my first practice. After that, whenever they practised, I went to look over the hedge to cadge an invitation. I always got it, for they were very kind. Where my intense keenness for cricket came from I cannot imagine, for I had never played before. My defensive play at this period of my career was very stubborn, but I had no strokes; in fact, my conception of the game consisted chiefly in not getting out and in moving my bat as little as possible. However, my enjoyment was intense. I became a devotee of the game, and never missed a local cricket match. My great hero, besides my two patrons, was a left-hand bowler named Hawes, who played for St. Mary Cray. He was a wonderful field to his own bowling, and a dead shot at throwing down the wicket when the batsman played the ball back to him and backed up out of his ground. Hawes was a good bat and a local oracle on the game. I used to hang about to hear what he had to say on the theory of cricket; he said a good deal, but his great dictum, especially when he was bowled out with a small score, was, "Forward play's the thing." Acting on this dictum, much to the detriment of my success, I thought that the whole art of cricket consisted in playing forward. I mention this as a warning to youth, for it was not till twenty years afterwards, when I met Ranjit Sinhji, whose advice is, "Back play is the thing," that I began to get really up sides with first-class bowling. At present my batting is a mixture of Hawes and Ranjit Sinhji; the more the latter element predominates the more runs I get.



C. B. FRY, AGED 15 MONTHS.
From a Photo. by Hennah and Kent, Brighton.

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At the age of nine I went to a school at Chislehurst. It was a mixed sort of old-fashioned dame school; the boys varied in age from nine to nineteen. Our games were rather curious. Here I began football. We played rules of our own, somewhat resembling those of the Harrow game. If you caught the ball on the full volley you made your mark and had a free kick; if you mulled your catch it was "hands," and the other side had a free kick. But the rules of our game varied according to the captain's caprice. We only played one out-match that I remember: against a school from Bromley. As our opponents played the proper Association rules and we played our own, and the umpire was an indecisive sort of fellow, we did not get very far with the match. My first cricket match was against the same school. I made seven runs—a four and a three, both to leg. Curiously enough, seven has always been my unlucky number at cricket; my lucky number is thirteen. We used to play on the West Kent ground. There I saw the best catch made I have ever seen. West Kent were playing some match, and a man in a deerstalker's cap came out to field as a substitute. He was sent to field long-on. The batsman hit a tremendous balloon up in the air, the substitute ran back with all his might to get under it, jumped a stiff iron rail that encircles the ground, and caught the ball in the middle of his jump. Technically it ought not to have been out, but the batsman was a sportsman and retired.

Our practice games were not well organized. One in particular I remember. It lasted one ball. Our best bowler chanced to be an Australian. He and I blacked one another's eyes more than once over the rival merits of "W. G." and Murdoch. Well, having picked up sides, the Australian started to bowl, but instead of bowling his usual over-arm, he fired in an underhand daisy-clipper, and a fatal. The victim was an obstinate Scotchman who refused to go out for "a sneak." There was some argument. The Scotchman collared the ball, the only one we had, and a stump, and edged off across the field. We followed, protesting. We tried to collar him, but he eluded us and made off across country. He headed down a very long hill towards Chislehurst Station and up the opposite hill right away to Bickley, with ten or more of us in full cry. We cornered him once or twice, but he kept us off with a pocket-knife in one hand and a stump in the other, and broke bay. Eventually, after about six miles run, we nailed him in a swing gate by stratagem and the aid of a postman, somewhere over near Bromley. We drove home in a four-wheeler, four of us and the captive inside, the rest on top, creating a great sensation all the way. The measles took me off next day, but when I came back, weeks afterwards, pear-drops were still being doled out after tea as a reward for catching the runaway. I did not learn much cricket at that school. Not long afterwards it changed hands, and was organized into a modern private school. We played proper Association football and proper cricket. I was centre forward, and had the honour at the age of twelve of playing for the West Kent Football Club, owing to one of their men not turning up. I touched the ball three times in that match. We played some small cricket matches against other schools. I was the spot batsman of our team, but had a great failing: I could never get runs in the first innings.

One holiday, about this time, it was revealed to me that I could really jump a bit. I owned an ugly, one-eyed fox-terrier called Dan. One evening, up in the meadow above our garden, he came out of a hedge walking sideways, looking more evil than ever and foaming at the mouth. I took two steps, cleared a ditch and a highish hedge, dropped 10ft. into our garden, and was up a slim plum-tree before you could say "knife." Dan came slowly after and squatted at the bottom, but he brought a toad in his mouth, and I perceived he was not mad beyond the degree of trying to eat the toad. So I came down, got a saucer of water to make sure about the dog, and then went to look at what I had jumped over. It was much higher than my head; not to mention the ditch. It was many years before I jumped as high again.

The first race I ever won was a steeplechase at a regatta at Charmouth, in Dorsetshire. The field was a mixed one, including a policeman, two coastguards, a fisherman, a gardener, and several boys. The course was about half a mile; the first obstacle a big agricultural roller, through the upright shafts of which we had to climb. As no one after that knew the course, and each one waited on the other to see where to go, the race was run very slowly till we got near the straight, which was a stretch of turf very much on the incline; down this my legs ran away with me and I won very easily. A bob-tailed sheep-dog ran in the race and came in first, but was disqualified for not having paid any entrance-fee. The prize was half a sovereign, which was paid me

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across the grocer's counter. So I have been a professional under A.A. rules all my time. I remember experiencing for the first time in that race the delicious feeling of speed and the thrill of forging ahead at the finish. That was a lucky day: in the evening I caught my first trout of decent size; I lured him with a black gnat, and he weighed just under a pound.

In 1885 I went to Repton School, where I had a splendid chance in cricket, football, and athletics. I began my football there as a centre forward. We used to play two centre forwards and only two half-backs. But I never did much good at forward. My second year I played a few times at half-back, but eventually went full-back to fit into a House team. We used to have compulsory football on half-holidays, but the best fun for all those outside the school team were the cup ties, junior and senior, for the House challenge cup. My word, what matches we had! English Cup ties against Tottenham Hotspurs and Sheffield United are nothing to them. I got into the school team as right back, and played for three years. We had very strong teams then. I can remember one terrific match in which we played a draw with the Derby County League team, and another in which we drew with Cambridge University. I believe I should have got into the school team a year earlier than I did had I not in a practice game taken upon myself to try to charge Mr. Harry Vassall, the great Rugby forward, who was, and still is, a master at Repton. Mr. Vassall weighed about 17st., and when he played Association with us maintained his Rugby traditions by running as straight as a die, and woe betide obstacles. Electing to make myself an obstacle, I passed away into space, and did not recover my equilibrium for a year; lack of judgment on my part.



THE REV. A. F. E. FOREMAN, WHO TAUGHT C. B. FRY MOST OF HIS FOOTBALL AND CRICKET.
From a Photo. by W. W. Winter, Derby.

Although, like most other footballers, I improved in value in some respects after I left school, and became heavier and stronger, I have never since been able to kick as neatly and accurately as I could then. I put this down partly to the constant practice we used to have at school in kicking a football about at odd hours, dozens of us at a time, on a piece of ground called the paddock, and partly to the constant playing of what we called "yard football." We used to play this game in the asphalt yards attached to our houses, wearing tennis shoes and using an india-rubber ball about a third the size of a football. This game made one very accurate and quick with one's feet. I have often wished since I could get the same sort of practice, especially before English Cup ties, for it is far less strain on the legs than ball practice with a real football.

When I went to Repton the captain of cricket was Mr. F. G. J. Ford, the great Middlesex batsman. He was a magnificent school cricketer, and I can remember watching him from the paddock bank in distant reverence. Mr. L. C. H. Palairet got into the Repton team in my first summer; he was quite a small boy, but played in beautiful style. My first sphere of action was the fourth ground, where we played pick-up matches on half-holidays, and had net practice on the principle of "you batted if you bowled the man out." In my third year, when Mr. L. C. H. Palairet was captain, I got my cricket colours. My chief merit was being able to stick in, for I was a marvellously stiff player and could not hit a bit except on the leg side. This stiffness was due, I believe, to the misconception that the art of batting consisted entirely in playing forward; I used to tie myself up into extraordinary knots trying to play forward at unsuitable balls, and I played forward all wrong, with stiff

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arms and wrists and no swing. However, after getting into the eleven I received some excellent coaching from the Rev. A. F. E. Foreman. He was an inspiring and encouraging coach, and had a way of making one play better without saying anything. The chief lesson he taught was to play your strokes hard, to put your bat up against the ball. He left you to develop your own style and make the most of your natural strokes. He succeeded in teaching me a certain amount of freedom; and he is the only coach, except Alfred Shaw, in 1899, from whom I have ever learnt anything. In fact, any success I have had in cricket I owe greatly to Mr. Foreman. Our school professional was a good practice bowler, medium pace, right hand, but his only lesson was "Come forward to her," no matter where the ball pitched. The great defect of school coaching is that boys are taught to play forward and nothing else. Boys are not taught to play back or to use their feet properly, either in turning to place the ball or in running out to drive; nor are they taught to alter their play according to the state of the wicket. By the end of my school time I could hit over-pitched and pull short bowling, but good-length bowling gave me a good deal of trouble. I remember one of the masters said he did not see how I was ever to make runs against first-class bowling. Still, I recollect once making twenty-eight against Mr. F. R. Spofforth, on a sticky wicket; Spofforth's balls broke so much from the off that when I played forward at him the ball hit my bat and went away to leg. I have since made a useful and intentional stroke of that—which shows how you learn things at cricket. The most exciting cricket match I remember at Repton was a House final. We had about 120 runs to get to win, but overnight a fellow in our house gave a "leaving grub," a sort of evening cricket lunch, in his study; there was a defective pie, and seven of our men were poisoned. I escaped because I was carving salmon at the time the pie went round. Next day we went in to bat with four men. I was missed at slip in the first over, but afterwards made seventy-three, and we scraped home with the last of our four men in.

In athletic sports a good many prizes came my way at school. I believe I first showed promise as a half-miler, but never did much good afterwards on the flat except in the 100 yards. My chief events were the hurdles and the two jumps. My best high jump at school was 5ft. 6½in., and my best long jump 21ft., which is still, I think, the record at Repton. School long jumping is usually very poor, partly because the jumping-place is generally very bad, but chiefly because boys jump too low. Mr. Foreman first taught me to go high in long jumping. He found me practising one rainy day, took off a big black mackintosh he was wearing, made a heap of it in front of the mark, and dared me to jump anywhere near it; so I jumped high in the air and put about 3ft. on to my previous best. After that I took a great interest in long jumping. My hurdling method at school was rather peculiar. As a small boy I used to take five steps in between and then jump the hurdle. Afterwards I set about learning the three-stride method. Now, the proper method, of course, is to take three strides in between and fly the hurdle in your fourth, coming down on the other foot from that with which you took off. But I fancied the method consisted in taking two strides in between and over in the third—an almost impossible feat; though I had a good try at it, and after much practice succeeded in clearing two hurdles in that style. Needless to say, I found it no go, and gave it up. Then I tried four strides in between. This necessitates changing at each successive hurdle the foot you take off from if you fly the obstacle. I did not like changing my feet, so evolved a most peculiar way of clearing the hurdles. I used to take off with my right foot, shoot my left leg right out in front of me over the hurdle, and come down again on the same foot I took off from. I found I could go fairly fast that way, but our hurdles were several inches low; over those of full height I found the method defective. It is a great pity that hurdling in proper style is not taught at school with the hurdles, and the distances in between proportionately reduced to suit smaller boys. Done in proper style hurdling is the best of all athletic events, but in school sports it is the exception rather than the rule to see any competitor run with the three-stride method.

Before going up to Oxford I got some experience of first-class football in playing for the Casuals on their northern tours. We played against Everton and Sunderland, and other of the League teams. I also played my first county cricket match before going up. It was for Surrey against Warwickshire at the Oval, the only time I played for Surrey. I made 1 and 0 not out. W. A. J. West, the famous umpire, who then played for Warwickshire, bowled me out first innings with a

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yorker. The second innings we had only five to get to win, and Brockwell obtained them before I had a hit. When I got a telegram asking me to play at the Oval, I was playing in a match at Minehead against Lynton; I was so delighted that I went in for free hitting, and nearly killed Sir George Newnes, who was playing on the other side, with a skimmer to square-leg.

At Oxford I played all four years I was up in the Association football team. I was left back my first year, but changed to the right in my second, when Mr. W. J. Oakley came up. The main difference I noticed between school and first-class football was that in the ordinary run of school matches the forwards opposed to one rarely had the ball in much control, and so the back could rush in and get a fairly easy kick, whereas against first-class forwards, who kept the ball close, I found the difficulty was to get to the ball at all. We had not much of a team my first year, but the other three were good ones, especially the third, of which I was captain. We had Mr. G. O. Smith as centre forward, Mr. W. J. Oakley at back, and Mr. G. B. Raikes in goal, all of whom played against Scotland for England. In fact, that team was one of the best there has been at either University. We lost only one match in our season, but, unfortunately that match was the one against Cambridge. When we got to Queen's Club we found the ground frost-bound and crinkled with ice. The Cambridge captain was willing to play although the ground was unfit. I did not want to play, but as Oakley and myself were both engaged in the sports and stood to win three events between us, and as I thought our team was too good to lose under any circumstances, I consented. The Cambridge team was heavier than ours, and beat us by their rushing tactics. It was a sad day. Mr. L. V. Lodge played a marvellous game at back for Cambridge. None of the inter-'Varsity matches I played in were very good ones, and I did not enjoy them much. In my first year at Oxford I played for England against the Canadians at the Oval. The English team was chiefly made up of amateurs, but was a strong one, and won easily. The Canadian team was not very good.

J. Walker. E. H. Alexander. G. B. Raikes. W. J. Oakley.



G. O. Smith. E. C. Bliss. F. W. Carlton. C. B. Fry (Capt.). C. D. Hewitt. B. N. Bosworth-Smith. E. F. Buzzard.

From a Photo. by] C. B. FRY AS CAPTAIN OF THE OXFORD FOOTBALL TEAM, 1893-4. *[Gillman, Oxford.*

For some reason or other Association is not nearly so popular at Oxford as Rugby. In my time, if a Rugby and an Association match were going on at the same time in the Parks, scarcely anyone would look on at the latter, while the ropes round the Rugby enclosure were thronged with hundreds of

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spectators. This was rather discouraging. I used to play three-quarter back in my college Rugby team, and very nearly got my Rugby Blue in my fourth year; in fact, I played for the 'Varsity fifteen in all matches till a fortnight before the match with Cambridge, when I had the ill-luck to crock my thigh. As a Rugby player I was a pure sprinter. I never learnt the art of falling on the ball to stop a rush, nor the art of collaring people round the ankles. My tackling was of a very scrambling order, and consisted chiefly in jumping on my opponent's back and embracing his neck. But I believe I was chosen as reserve three-quarter for the South against the North that year. The Rugby game at Oxford, where they played the Welsh three-quarter game to perfection, suited me well, and I enjoyed it immensely, more, in fact, than Association; but when, after coming down, I played for Blackheath and the Barbarians, I did not get on so well and returned to the other game. On the whole, I think that Rugby is a more exciting game than Association when the play is open and the three-quarters have plenty of running, but not when the play is close and consists of incessant scrimmaging. There is nothing in Association equal in excitement to a good combined run by Rugby three-quarters. On the other hand, I think the average Association game is quicker and more interesting than the average Rugby game.



A SNAP-SHOT OF C. B. FRY IN CAP AND GOWN AT OXFORD.

The most amusing Rugby game I ever played in was for the Corinthians against the Barbarians, before I played for Oxford. The Corinthians held a competition with the Barbarians, playing them at Rugby, Association, and cricket, and also meeting them at athletic sports on inter-University lines. We won easily at Association, and, funnily enough, beat our opponents also at their own game by two goals and two tries to two goals and one try. The Barbarian fifteen included seven or eight internationals, while only two or three of us had ever played Rugby before. The truth of it was, the ground was too hard for Rugby, and when the Barbarian phalanx rushed through our very amateur attempts at a scrum, they could not keep control of the ball. Our forwards made wonderful work of dribbling the egg-shaped ball. Mr. P. M. Walters performed admirably for us at back. His brother, A.M., scored several tries; when he got hold of the ball and an opponent tried to collar him, A.M., instead of trying to dodge, rushed at and charged him with his shoulder. Our methods were very unorthodox, and took the Barbarians by surprise. But, after all, it was an extraordinary performance for fifteen Association players to defeat fifteen Rugby players, and those very good ones at the Rugby game.

Since my 'Varsity days I have played chiefly for the Corinthians. We have had some most enjoyable football on our northern tours at Christmas time, especially against our old-time opponents, Queen's Park, at Glasgow. But perhaps the best matches in which I have played for the Corinthians were those against Aston Villa and Sheffield United for the Sheriff's Shield. We found these two clubs most sporting opponents.

Two seasons ago, when I came to live near Southampton, I was invited to play in the Southampton Club in their Southern League matches. Southampton were beaten in the first round of the Cup that year, but they won the Southern League championship. This year I had the uncommon pleasure for an amateur of getting into the final of the Cup. I have never enjoyed any football more than that I have played for Southampton. Cup ties are hard work, but they are fine sport.

My experiences of track athletics belong entirely to my Oxford days. In the O.U.A.C. sports in my Freshman's year I astonished myself by jumping 22ft. 7in. For this I got my Blue, and also a second string in the high jump. At Queen's Club that year, against Cambridge, I further astonished myself by jumping 23ft. 5in. I cannot remember anything particular about that jump, except that I got a beautiful take-off from the board and a splendid lift up, and felt very neat in the air. It was a beautiful day for jumping, warm and fresh; weather has a great effect on jumpers. My second year I won at Queen's Club with 23ft. 0½in., but in the trial sports at Oxford I did 23ft. 6½in., which was the best I ever did. It was a curious jump that. I had only practised

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three times, and had spiked my big toe in landing in the pit, and I very nearly did not jump in the sports at all. I did not take off accurately on the board, but 9in. behind it, so the actual distance I covered was 24ft. 3½in. My last stride before taking off was much shorter than usual, and I seemed to stop dead while you might count one before I took off; however, for some reason or other I seemed to develop more spring than usual, and went very high in the air. When I landed in the pit, instead of, as usual, having to struggle for my balance not to fall back, I simply bounced clean out of the pit, and landed about 6ft. away on the track. The success of that jump is still a mystery to me. My third year I jumped 23ft. at Oxford, but before the inter-'Varsity sports bruised my heel badly, and though I won against Cambridge with 22ft. 4in., I was never able to jump properly again. I wonder I did not hurt my heel before, as my way of taking off was very hard on it. In my run up to the jump the marks of my spikes were in a dead straight line one behind the other, but in my last stride I used to make a complete quarter turn towards the left, and slue my right foot a good 12in. or more across to the left of the line of my run; the outside edge of my heel was planked to the ground with great force, the flat of my foot coming down afterwards. It always felt to me as if I got my spring from the small of my back and my hips. That summer, in the sports between Oxford and Yale, I jumped without any practice, and was beaten by Mr. L. P. Sheldon, of Yale, with 22ft. 11in. In the last of my four tries I got dead on the board and felt I was going to make a good jump, but the board split under my spikes, and I went a terrific header into the sawdust. After that I was no good, as my heel bruised worse than ever. I never liked practising for long jumping, and never did well in practice—only once or twice over 22ft. Long jumping is a great strain, and it is difficult to screw oneself up to the effort of will required for a big jump without the excitement of competition. I practised for long jumping chiefly by sprinting one day and high jumping the next; but I believe what did me more good than anything else was doing standing jumps regularly every morning over a big arm-chair in my room.

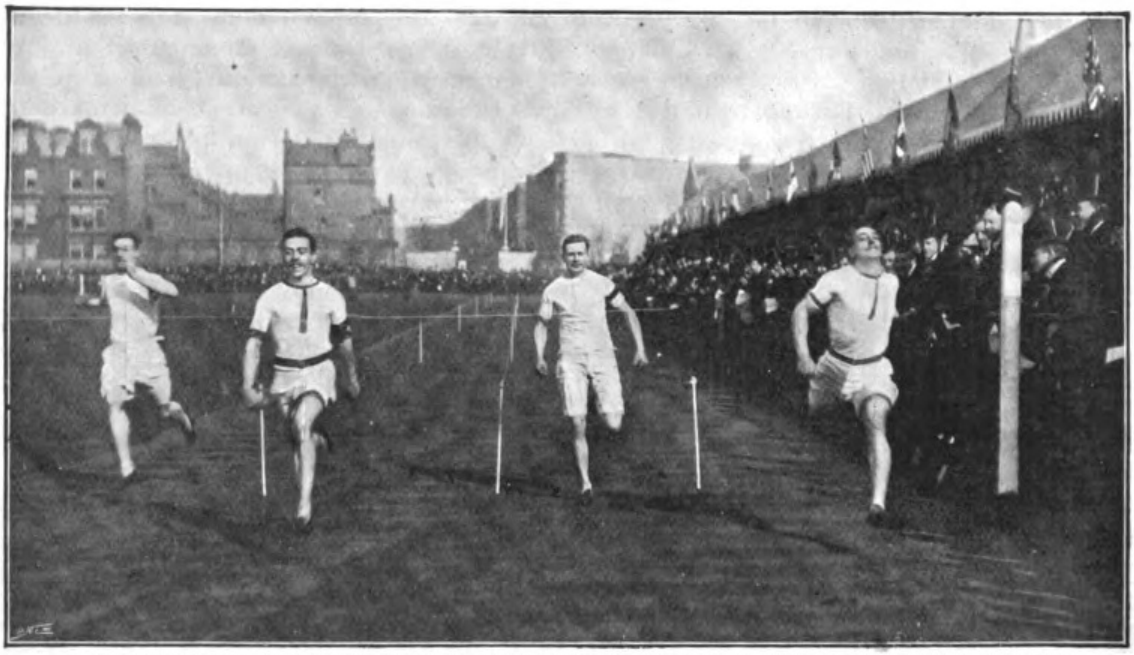
Of the three times I ran for Oxford against Cambridge in the 100 yards my only win, to be Irish, was a dead-heat. Curiously enough, I ran a dead-heat with the same man, Mr. A. Ramsbotham, three weeks before in the trial sports. My version of the race is that I won exclusively; Mr. Ramsbotham is as equally dead sure he won. So the chances are that the judges were right in their decision. The reason I thought I won was that I did not see Ramsbotham until after we were past the post. It is a curious thing that in sprint racing the moment a competitor is the least bit in front of you he appears to you to be well ahead; of course, you don't look at him unless you wish to lose a yard, but you can see him out of the corner of your eye without looking his way. If a man is running dead level with you, you cannot see him at all. But the worsted was broken nearer to him than to me, and an instantaneous photo. taken at the finish and reproduced on the next page appears a trifle in his favour.* I knew in the last ten



MAKING THE RECORD LONG-JUMP OF 23FT. 5IN. AGAINST CAMBRIDGE, 1892.
From a Photo. by Stearn, Cambridge.

* Most readers, we think, on inspecting the photograph will come to the conclusion that Mr. Fry was the first to break the worsted.—Ed.

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C. B. FRY RUNNING A DEAD-HEAT WITH A. RAMSBOTHAM IN THE 100YDS. RACE AGAINST CAMBRIDGE, 1893.
From a Photo by Stearn, Cambridge.

yards of that race that someone was gaining on me. It is a very curious thing that, if a man is running behind you but not gaining on you, you are not conscious of his presence, but the moment he is coming up to you, you feel him at once by instinct. The last year I ran a very curious thing happened to me. I got a big lead at the start, and two-thirds through the race I held so good a lead that I think I must have won; unfortunately, it occurred to me to wonder where my comrade, Mr. G. Jordan, was, and in that brief flash of inattention, though I did not look round or consciously relax my pace, the whole field passed me and I finished last. A man to sprint his fastest must glue his mind to the effort of reaching the tape; if he relaxes his will for a moment he automatically slackens his pace; at any rate, this holds good for runners who do not race sufficiently often to make full speed a habit. Once at Oxford, in a heat of a strangers' race, I ran the 100 yards in 10sec. by the aid of a slight wind. In the final heat, which was also timed at 10sec., I was beaten by a fraction of an inch. One of the judges gave me the race, the other gave it a dead-heat, but the referee decided that the other man had won by half an inch. The prize I got for second in this race, a cigarette-case, had a curious adventure. It was stolen out of my pocket at a cricket match one year, and when I played at the same place the next year



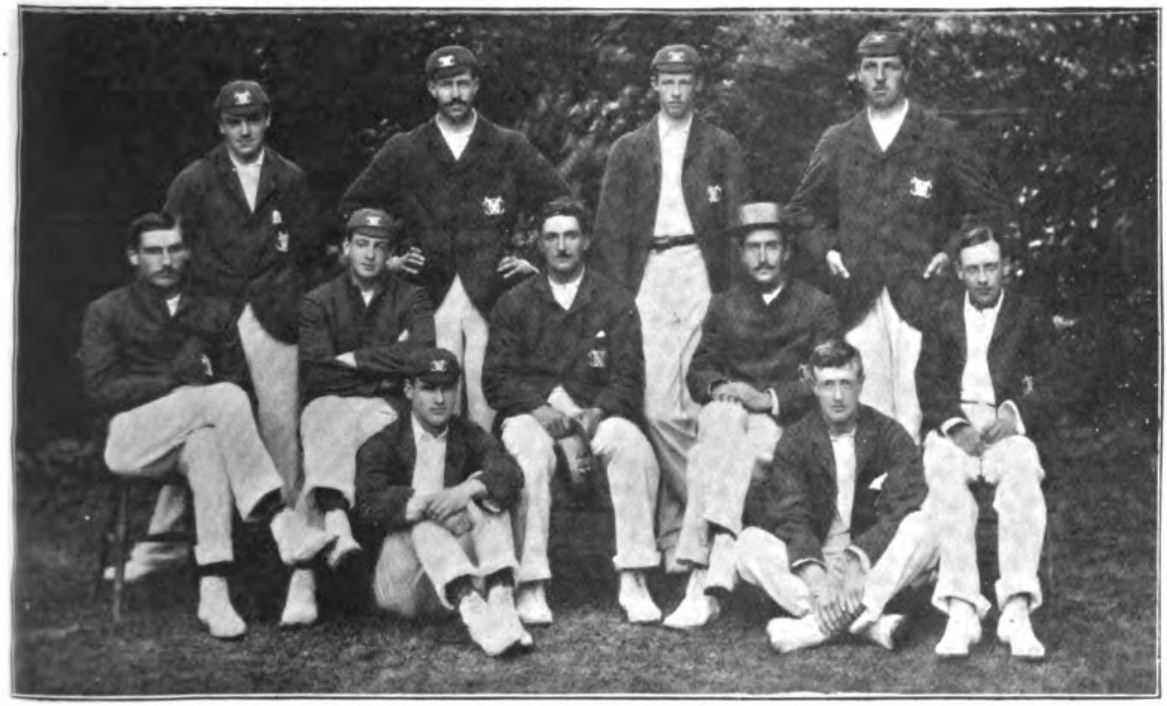
"OXFORD ATHLETICS."
By permission of "Vanity Fair."

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it came back by post with an apology. The first time Oxford met Yale I got so good a start in the 100 yards that I won; it was rather a surprise, as I had been playing cricket during the previous month or so, and had only had four days' training.

Being fortunate enough to make a century in the Freshmen's cricket match at Oxford, I was at once given a trial in the eleven, and in course of time got my Blue. At one time I feared I should be left out, so I trained for a week, and whether by reason of this or of a good wicket I made 115 runs against Somersetshire and re-established myself. Upon my Oxford cricket, though I enjoyed it intensely, I do not look back with much approval. I was a stiff, shoulder-tied sort of batsman, unless the bowling happened to suit me exactly, and a laborious sort of bowler.

R. P. Lewis. G. B. Raikes. G. R. Bardswell. The late D. H. Forbes.



G. J. Mordaunt. L. C. V. Bathurst. C. B. Fry (Capt.). F. A. Phillips. R. C. N. Palairet. H. K. Foster. H. D. G. Leveson-Gower.

From a Photo. by] C. B. FRY AS CAPTAIN OF THE OXFORD CRICKET ELEVEN, 1894. *[Gillman, Oxford.*

The inter-'Varsity cricket match of my first year ended in a glorious and unexpected triumph for Oxford. My chief recollection of the match is that I felt abjectly nervous until I went in. Nervousness, as a rule, made me stiffer and slower than ever; but on that occasion the effect was exactly the reverse. We won the toss, went in first, and lost two wickets for 0. Then I went in. Now, I am not and never was a cutter, but the first ball I received, a fastish good-length one on the middle stump, bowled by Mr. F. S. Jackson, I cut past third man harder than my hardest drive. After that I recovered myself and played a stocky, quiet innings of forty-four. As Mr. M. R. Jardine made 140 and Mr. V. T. Hill 114, we realized a winning total. Cambridge had to follow on, and made a big score in their second innings, but we won easily. I made twenty-seven second innings. Next year we had a weak side, and as no miracle intervened to save us we got horribly beaten. I made seven and thirty-one, I think. My third year I was captain, and delighted myself by making 100 not out. It was not a brilliant innings, but it was satisfactory to me. I had made scarcely any runs all the season; in fact, my average previous to the Lord's match was only seven, and the critics said I ought to have turned myself out of the team. The strange part of it was I was in first-rate form and could play splendid innings at the nets. However, nothing went right in matches, and I was very sick. I could not get a bat I liked; you never can when you are not making runs. Just before we started from Oxford to play our out-matches, old Petty, the head of the ground staff, gave me a bat which he declared was a beauty. It was a Warsopp, of good grain, but much too heavy for me, and was handed to me in an old-fashioned green-baize bat-cover. The first time I tried it I made a

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century at Hove against Sussex, and I used it in the inter-'Varsity match. My innings was slow and scratchy till I got eighty-three, and the last man came in. This was Mr. R. P. Lewis, a first-rate wicket-keeper, but a batsman who often failed to stay in. He came in looking pale, but assured me, in a husky voice, "It's all right, Charles; I won't get out." He played part of an over; then I had a go. I hit a lofty fourer on the off and two on the on-side, and finally ran out with a most audacious pull, a curious finish to the sort of innings I had been playing. My partner was bowled the very next ball. The Cambridge bowling was not very good that year. In my last inter-'Varsity match I narrowly escaped "a pair of spectacles." We began our first innings in a light so bad that the gas was lighted in the telegraph-rooms; but the umpires were obdurate. Under the circumstances I fail to understand why I tried to hook a straight good-length ball, especially as the pitch was very fast. Anyway, I was caught and bowled by Mr. C. E. M. Wilson for 0. The second innings, after snicking one run, I was both l.b.w. and bowled.

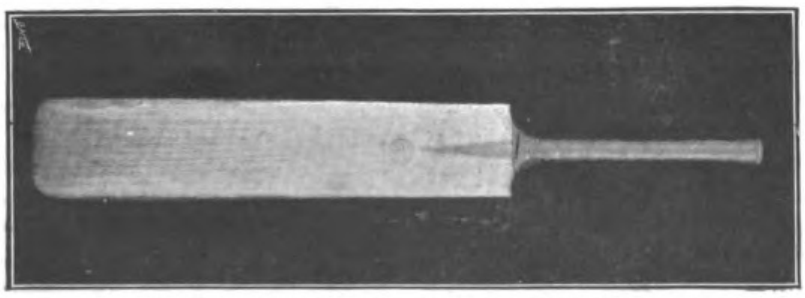


C. B. FRY PRACTISING IN HIS GARDEN.
From a Photo. by the Globe Photo. Co., Southampton.

The first century I ever made in a county match was for Sussex against Gloucestershire at Bristol. That was the first time I saw "W.G." The wicket was a sticky one, and I made some strange strokes off J. J. Ferris and Roberts, besides being morally bowled about half-a-dozen times by C. L. Townsend's leg-breaks, which I had no notion of playing. But I made 109. Next day I missed four dolly catches at mid-off, and nearly lost the match.

The first day of that match we had adventures. It was August Bank Holiday, and the ground was so saturated with rain that we could not play; but as it was fine overhead the crowd rebelled. They invaded the ground to cut up the pitch, but Spry, the ground man, nipped out and roped off a piece of turf some thirty yards away from the pitch, and into this the mob dug its heels and umbrellas. We were then besieged in the pavilion. "W. G." tried to smooth the crisis by organizing a football match, but the crowd would not let us out to play. Then he and Mr. W. L. Murdoch made speeches without effect. Finally, quite late, we escaped by back-doors.

After Ranjit Sinhji began to play for Sussex I had an opportunity of observing how cricket ought really to be played. Although I have never been able to play in the least like him, I have certainly always made many more runs from the time I began to study the way he uses his bat.



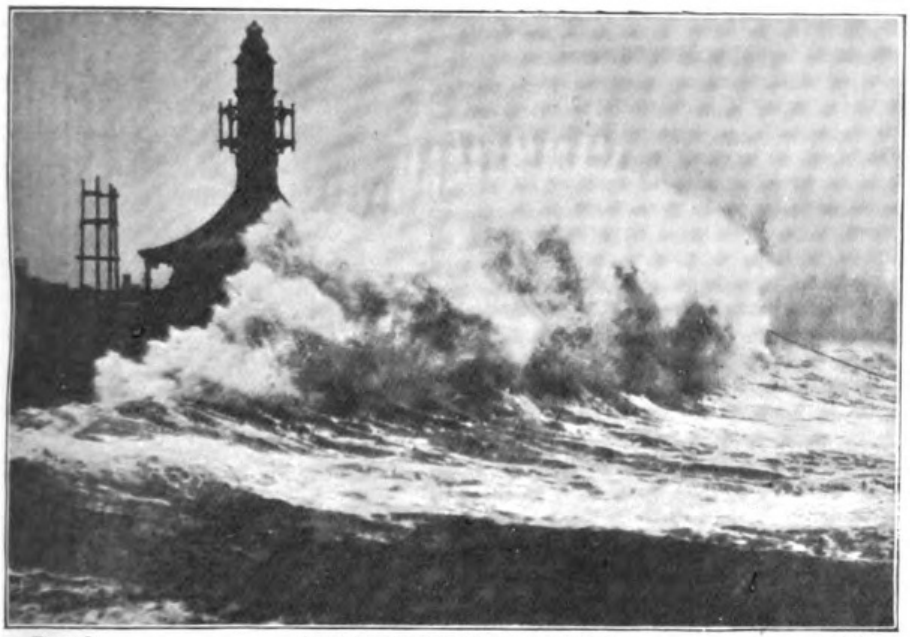
THE BAT WITH WHICH C. B. FRY MADE ALL HIS RUNS LAST YEAR.
From a Photo. by the Globe Photo. Co., Southampton.

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Fighting the Sea.

By Nicholas Everitt.

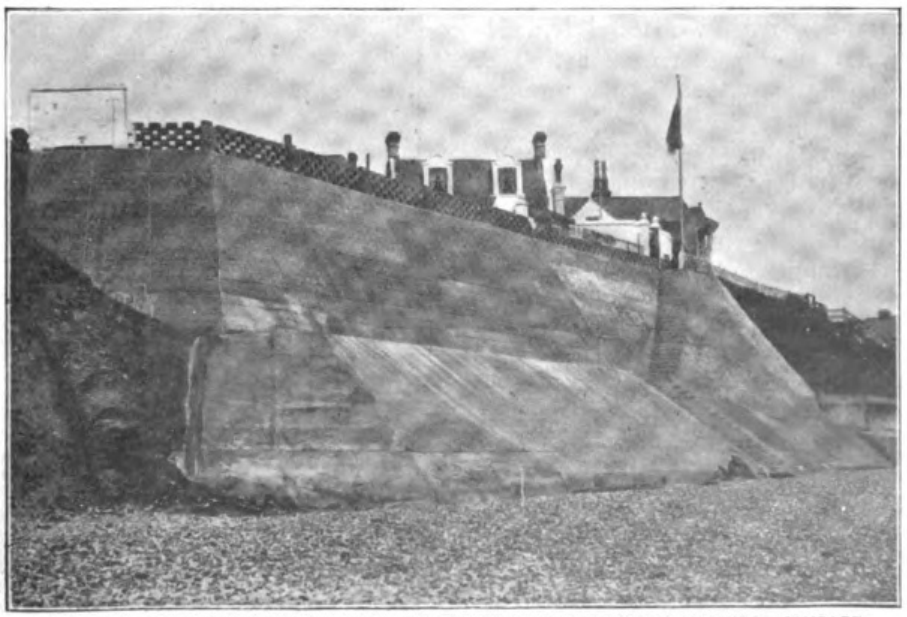
"*Auf Wind und Meer gebautes Glück ist Schwankend.*"—Gutzkow.



From a] LOWESTOFT PIER DURING A GALE. [Photo.

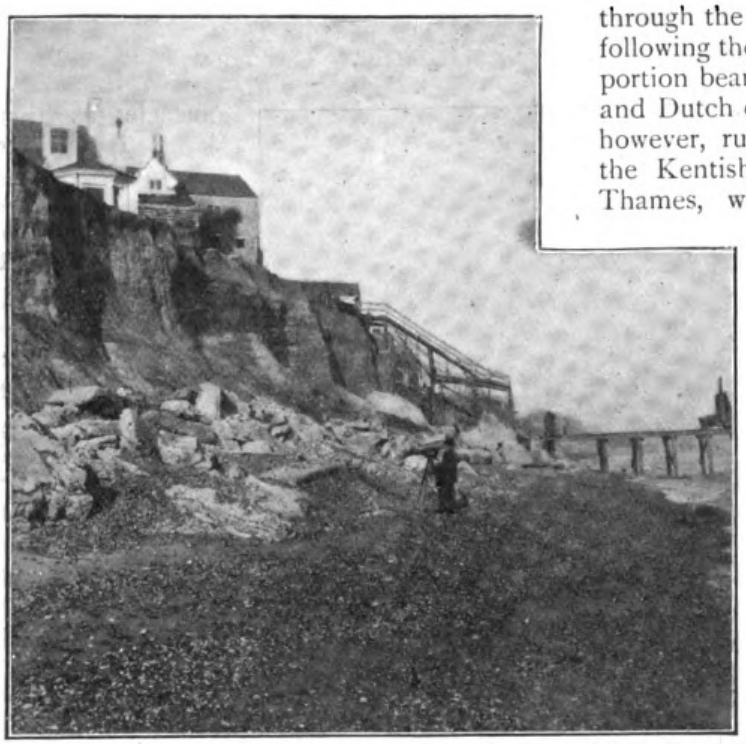
FEW people, perhaps, realize the enormous power exerted by great waves driven upon a shore before a gale. Only those who have seen the extreme ruin and devastation created upon defences apparently as solid as the living rock can obtain any idea of what this power really is, and what are the difficulties to be confronted by those whose duty it is to construct sea-barriers against the terrific battery of the waters. Next to actual experience, however, there is nothing which can convey so powerful an impression as such a series of photographs as those here reproduced. The tremendous force exerted by the crash of a big wave is shown in the most impressive manner possible to imagine. Whenever such a wave as that which appears in the photograph above reproduced encounters such an obstacle as that depicted in our second illustration, repeating its terrific blow with rhythmical precision, the result, as shown in the photographs which follow, is striking beyond words. This power of the waters may be studied with advantage at Lowestoft, where these photographs were taken. But fully to realize the special danger to which the whole of the East Anglian coast is subject from the wash or scour of the sea, it is necessary to understand what is called the "set" of the tides in the North Sea—an extremely interesting study.

Now, the great Atlantic tide wave with its enormous swell sweeps up along the west coast of Ireland and the Hebrides, and following a rule common to tides in general bears to the right round the north coast of Scotland and the Orkney and Shetland Isles, and there meeting the North Sea forces it southwards



From a] AN ASSUMED IMPREGNABLE RAMPART AGAINST THE WAVES, NEWLY FINISHED—COMPARE WITH THE NEXT ILLUSTRATION. [Photo.

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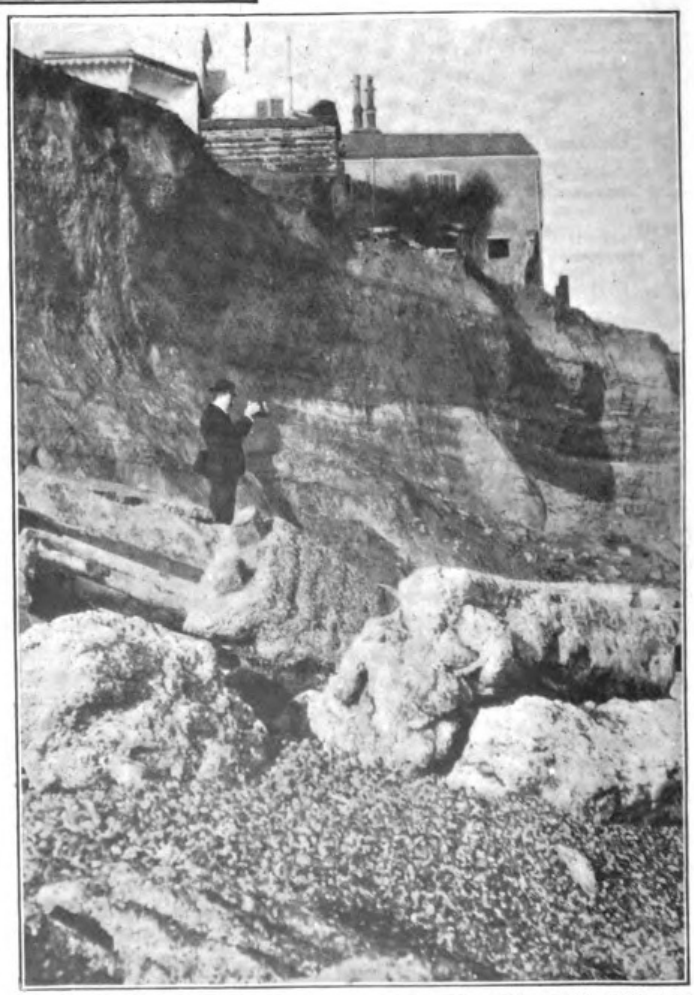
THE EFFECT OF A TWO DAYS' GALE ON THE DEFENCES SHOWN IN THE PRECEDING PHOTO.
From a Photo.

between the coast of the British Isles and that of Norway. On reaching the great Dogger Bank its progress is to a large extent diverted south-eastward towards the English coast. South of the Dogger Bank, and even nearer to our coast, is the Wells Bank. These great banks, forming a more or less continuous line (though, of course, with an opening between), force the sea into the comparatively narrow channel lying between their western edge and the English coast as far as the mouth of the Thames.

The ebbing tide follows, of course, the opposite direction, and it will thus be seen that the tides of the North Sea, though apparently (to the uninitiated visitor to the east coast) ebbing and flowing directly from and on to the shore eastwards and westwards, in reality run or "set" up and down the coast.

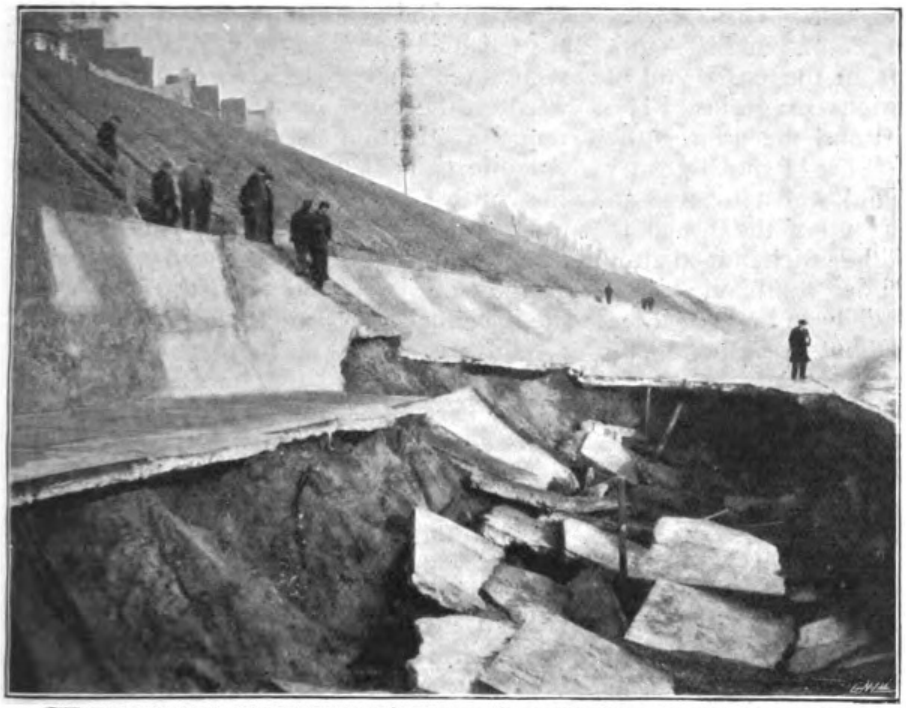
It is not, however, with the North Sea tide only that we have to deal. Some part of the Atlantic tide is diverted by the south-west promontory of England and flows up the English Channel, where it becomes known as the Channel tide, and rushes with increasing force through the narrow Straits of Dover, where, following the rule before mentioned, the main portion bears to the right along the French and Dutch coasts. The western fringe of it, however, runs, though at less height, round the Kentish Foreland to the estuary of the Thames, where it meets the North Sea tide, which, nevertheless, is of somewhat different force, being exactly twelve hours older from the Atlantic than the Channel tide, which it meets.

Owing to this meeting of the two tides off the Thames estuary, and to the fact that northward of this the one tide is flowing when the other is ebbing, the average rise at the former place is very considerably greater than it is farther north—more than twice as high, for instance, as is the average rise at Lowestoft, where, indeed,



A NEARER VIEW OF THE SAME, SHOWING HOW THE SOLID CONCRETE WAS BROKEN, WORN SMOOTH, AND ROLLED ABOUT, AND THE ENORMOUS MASS OF CLIFF EATEN AWAY BY THE WAVES.
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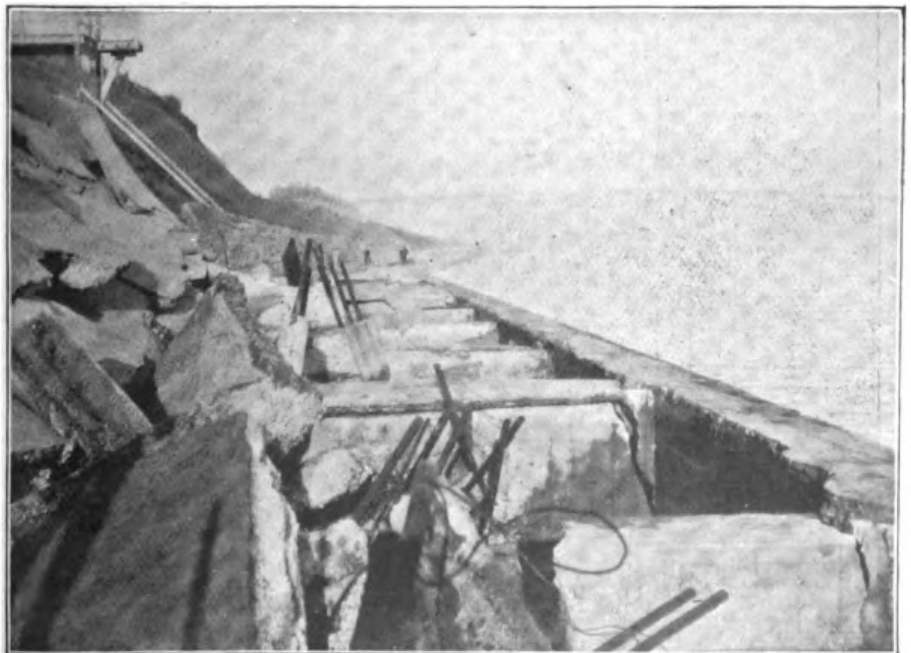


THE EFFECT OF A MODERATE NORTH-WESTER IN ABOUT TWO HOURS ON A CONCRETE ESPLANADE.
From a] *[Photo.*

it is practically high tide at the same time as it is low water on the opposite coast of Holland. When, however, we follow the English coast still farther north we discover that, owing to the jutting out of the Norfolk promontory right into the wake of the North Sea tide, that part of the coast-line that actually faces north is subjected to a rise nearly equal to that at the mouth of the Thames, whilst when we get round to the Wash we find, as would be expected from its peculiar formation and situation, the highest tide of all. Though, as we have seen, the rise at Lowestoft is comparatively small, averaging, perhaps, about 5ft., still the tide in the roadstead there runs quite as strongly as the higher rising tides farther north and south, if not stronger. This is accounted for by the channel caused by the Dogger and Wells banks, which finds its narrowest part approximately at this section of the coast.

It will be noticed that the channel formed between these great banks and the mainland is somewhat of the bottle shape, and this also is that of the North Sea itself. It is evident, therefore, that the incoming or flood tide will be of greater force off that part of the coast now under consideration, and will hence cause a greater "scour" of the beach than will the outgoing or ebb tide. Consequently, the tendency is for the sand and shingle to move southwards.

That this is so is very evident from the fact that wherever you have a projection into the sea on this coast, there, with hardly an exception, you will find the beach makes up on the north of it, as witness the accumulation north of the harbour mouth at Great Yarmouth and, to a less extent, north of



A NEW WALL OF MOST SUBSTANTIAL CHARACTER WAS NO SOONER COMPLETED THAN THE SEA PLAYED BATTLEDORE AND SHUTTLECOCK WITH ITS MASSIVE CONCRETE SLABS.
From a Photo.

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the north pier at Lowestoft. This explains at once the consequences of building out a solid pier on this part of the coast and of the principle of the various sea groins. The action of both the pier and the groin is the same, but the former (being of much greater magnitude and projection), whilst it causes an accumulation or making up of the beach to the northward, denudes the beach immediately to the south of the shifting sand and shingle that would naturally have been brought there by the flowing tide without correspondingly protecting it from the force of that tide; hence the damage to the coast indirectly caused by large solid piers is often very considerable. The small groins, on the other hand, are often found of very great service, for their very smallness prevents them from interfering with each other's action, and when placed at frequent intervals they cause a number of small accumulations near enough together to protect the whole line of coast.

We have so far only glanced at the effects of ordinary tides unaffected by the influence of the wind, and to what extent the force of an incoming tide is increased by a gale only those who have watched the effects of one can realize.

Curious as it may seem, the wind which has the greatest tendency to increase the rise of the tide at Lowestoft is one blowing, to some extent, off the land—we mean a north-west wind. To understand the reason of this we have again to examine our two tides. A glance at the map will show that the flow of the North Sea tide as far as Lowestoft Ness is in the main south-east, whilst that of the Channel tide is easterly, with, as we have seen, a tendency to lean to the right southward on the coast of France. When, then, we get a gale from the north-west across the Atlantic coincident with an incoming tide, the North Sea, with the huge volume of the main ocean behind, is driven with increased force and fury down our eastern coast, whilst at the same time and from the same cause the Channel tide, which ought then to be receding, is backed up by the excessive swell of the Atlantic, and this meeting the North Sea tide causes an enormous increase of water along the eastern coast.

The rise of neap tides at Lowestoft is about 3ft., and of spring tides, on an average under normal conditions, about 6½ft.; but the latter, under the influence of a big north-west gale, is sometimes increased to as much as 12ft. When it is remembered that the pressure of a body of water at rest is proportionate to its depth, and that the rate at which waves travel under the impetus of a gale may amount to anything from twenty to forty miles an hour, the force with which the sea breaks on to an obstruction as a cliff or sea-wall may to some extent be imagined.

This is perhaps not the place to inquire whether the authorities of Lowestoft have so far erected their defences on the soundest principles of engineering. But what the difficulties are which have to be encountered may be readily imagined by anyone who studies the illustrations of this article.



A WATER-LOGGED COLLIER RUNNING ASHORE DURING A GALE, THE CREW HAVING TAKEN TO THE RIGGING.
From a Photo.

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I.

IT was the height of the summer season, and on the crowded pier a little girl in a lace frock, who had frolicked with greater vigour than any of her kindred spirits on the threshold of life's day, paused for breath, tossing back her elaborate sun-bonnet, with its overpowering strings of broad white satin ribbon. A sigh of relief escaped her as the wind made merry with her curls.

"Take care your bonnet doesn't blow away," said a voice at her elbow, while a kindly hand, small and fragile, saved the frilled headgear from falling to the ground.

Victorine, of the lace and curls, looked up with a quick "Thank you."

She saw beside her a little girl of her own height and size, but the stranger could boast no dimples or wayward curls, no chiffons and laces.

Her sharp face had a pinched, unchildish look, which bespoke suffering.

A keen observer would have known at once the stern hand of the oppressor, either poverty or ill-health, played some part in the life of that thin little morsel of humanity. She was dressed in serviceable blue serge, her straw hat had seen better days, and yet every detail of her attire, every movement of the emaciated frame, every word and feature, stamped her as well bred.

"What is your name?" asked Victorine.

This was a question by which the little girl in the lace frock always manifested her interest in the unknown.

"Herminie Tempest," replied the child, leaning up against the rail dividing them from the musicians.

She looked curiously at Victorine, her eyes glowing suddenly at the sight of her turquoise necklace and the tiny gold bangles clasping the plump little arms. A miniature chain dotted with charms hung from her waist, and she wore a wee brooch with her name in pearls.

The children hardly knew why, but the delights of dancing round the bandstand faded to insignificance, and instead they lingered talking. Victorine discovered that Herminie had been ill; she was here for her health, and not simply because her people were tired out by the London season.

"What is it like to be ill?" asked Victorine, curiously.

"Oh, you lie in bed, and it's horrid!" Herminie declared.

At last the chiming of a great clock on the pavilion warned them they must part.

"Miss Maybourn, my governess, is beckoning me," whispered Victorine. "Can't we walk back together? Who is looking after you?"

Herminie pointed to an insignificant little maid.

"She is the servant at our lodgings; she likes coming on the pier. I will tell her I want to go home now."

The children trotting in front of their attendants managed to keep together.

"That is where I am staying," said Herminie, pointing across the road.

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"Oh, what a nasty little house!" cried Victorine, expressing her thoughts aloud.

"Yes, it is rather stuffy indoors," Herminie confessed, "but I go out a great deal, and then I don't smell the dinner cooking. It's always like that when you go away from home, but I did not mind it before I was ill. Is your place very stuffy, too?"

Victorine's big, round eyes opened widely.

"Oh, no! We are staying at the Hotel Imperial, and it's ever so big!"

She pointed to a palatial building on the esplanade, with gold balconies full of flowers.

Miss Maybourn drew nearer and Herminie darted away, rejoining the breathless little maid, panting after her under the shade of a dirty white cotton parasol.

"I hope you haven't been dull," said Victorine, with one of her coaxing smiles, as she took Miss Maybourn's hand; "but, you see, I made friends with that little girl. When you make friends with a person, you like to talk to them, don't you?"

"I thought she looked a very nice child," replied Miss Maybourn, who had noticed the inborn air of distinction which Herminie unconsciously possessed.



"MRS. AMBLETON FELT AN EXCITED PULL AT HER ARM."

II.

THE following day being Sunday, Victorine, in a still more elaborate frock of exquisite lace, accompanied her mother to church.

Mrs. Ambleton made a truly remarkable figure, for she knew no moderation in dress and advertised her great wealth by displaying the fabulous fancies of fashion to a daring extent. She took with her to church an ivory prayer-book, a jewelled scent-bottle, and an extremely pretty child, toying with each in turn, and rustling out before the sermon, well aware she had attracted the attention of many curious eyes.

Her husband, a stout man with a red beard, joined her on the esplanade, where, by mutual consent, the community paraded either to criticise their neighbours, exercise their limbs, or inhale the salt sea breezes.

Victorine looked eagerly for her new friend, but despaired of finding her in the crowd.

Suddenly Mrs. Ambleton felt an excited pull at her arm, and a moment later she was aware that Victorine had publicly saluted, both by bowing, waving, and smiling, a shabbily-dressed little girl with a tall woman in rusty black.

In a few breathless words the child told how they had met.

Mrs. Ambleton's face grew red, even under its coating of powder.

"You must never mix with children of that stamp," she said. "I don't mind if you play with some of the smart little boys and girls in the hotel, but it is dreadful to talk to people on the pier! If you see her again, remember you are not to speak!"

A lump rose in Victorine's throat, so that

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she could not answer; a mist gathered before her eyes, yet the sun still shone brightly as before.

Meanwhile Herminie was vanishing in the distance, explaining to her mother, the Hon. Mrs. Tempest, why she had been so warmly recognised by the little girl in the lace frock.

"But, my dear, she is the child of that exceedingly vulgar-looking woman!" gasped Mrs. Tempest. "I know the mother well by sight, and have been told they own a large upholstery establishment in London. I don't like your having any acquaintance with such people. Pray do not talk to Victorine again."

Though terribly poor, Mrs. Tempest was exceedingly proud. Herminie felt a pang of disappointment, for the child, whose whole appearance suggested wealth and luxury, fascinated and dazzled her.

Mrs. Tempest thought how wan, tired, and ill she looked, and her own face grew paler, while her heart-beats quickened. To the lonely widow this one ewe lamb converted a grey, cheerless life into something worth the living. For Herminie's sake she bitterly resented the reverses of fortune which made the struggle so hard; for Herminie her heart bled.

"Is it wicked to have an upholstery place?" asked the child, with a very deep sigh.

"Wicked! Why, of course not! What ever put such an idea into your head?"

"Because I am not to talk to Victorine."

"Ah!" murmured Mrs. Tempest, "that is a very different matter, but you will understand some day."

Herminie wondered how soon "some day" would come, when all these queer problems might be made plain. She looked back, but Victorine was out of sight.

"I shall keep away from the pier," she inwardly resolved. "It would be horrid to be there and not to speak!"

Her spirits flagged, she walked slowly, and every time her mother asked if she were tired Herminie shook her head. She was afraid of making her mother sad; she knew the old feeling of illness, recognising its familiar touch, conscious of the enemy's return.

"Mother must not be bothered," she thought; "I shall be well, perhaps, to-morrow; I don't want her to feel anxious."

In the small, wasted frame there burnt brightly the spirit of endurance. She was too unselfish to complain, too unselfish even to tell her mother how fond she had grown, during one short hour, of the little girl in the lace frock.

III.

It was not till a week later that Victorine happened to see the lodging-house maid who had been with Herminie on the pier.

They were both looking into the same shop window, richly decked with fruits and flowers.

Victorine edged up against her, avoiding Miss Maybourn's eye.

"How is Herminie?" she asked.

The girl started. She was leaning forward, resting both hands on the round wooden knob of her cotton sunshade.

"She's mortal bad, thank you, missy. I was just wishing I could take her some of those fine, big grapes. Her mother is regularly distracted; she thinks the doctor here is not treating her right."

Victorine stared. Then she brushed the curls from her eyes, and had only time to exclaim, "I didn't know she was ill. Oh, I am so sorry!" before Miss Maybourn hurried her away.

For some moments Victorine did not speak. A very active little brain may be busily at work even under a sun-bonnet.

"What are you thinking about?" asked Miss Maybourn, presently, noticing the unusual wistfulness in the baby-face.

"I was thinking of all the money I've saved," answered Victorine. "It would buy such lots and lots of grapes. What do people like when they are ill? I should want a doll in a blue frock that would shut its eyes when it lay down, and a heap of picture-books. I have been keeping my money till my legs grew a little longer, and then I meant to buy a very tiny bicycle, because it would be ages before I could ride a big one. I think I'll try and forget I wanted a bicycle and get some things for Herminie instead. Mother won't mind, because if Herminie is in bed I can't play with her, and I need not say who the things came from."

Miss Maybourn remembered the distinguished-looking child who, despite her plain and somewhat worn attire, appeared so unmistakably well bred, and she could not find it in her heart to thwart Victorine.

She knew how eagerly the money had been treasured, and was sure the sacrifice needed a very strong effort—one which would strengthen Victorine's character, though the child certainly looked more like a French doll than a person capable of sacrifice.

"I don't believe," said the little voice, with

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a suspicious tremor in it, "that a bicycle can be as nice as it looks! I sha'n't want one at all for quite a long time, you know."

The rose-bud mouth was set firm, there were no dimples to be seen.

IV.

THE lodging-house door was never locked, and mysterious parcels with Herminie's name attached to them perpetually made their appearance in the narrow hall. Herminie was quite sure a fairy brought them and told her mother so, with eyes that brightened in spite of weakness and pain.

Mrs. Tempest, watching her sick child's pleasure, blessed the unknown donor, forgetting her pride in the warmth of her gratitude.

Such flowers! such fruit! such toys! After the first few days of anonymous offerings, Herminie asked regularly what the fairy had sent.

Herminie, with childish intuition, had just the faintest suspicion of who the fairy might be. Mrs. Tempest never thought of Victorine, the little daughter of that flashy Mrs. Ambleton, who boasted no patrician descent, but only the golden key to luxury.

Besides drawing lavishly from her money-box, Victorine found plentiful stores of fruit in the big private sitting-room they occupied on the first floor. This she was at liberty to use, and she had only to scramble on her father's knee and rummage openly in his pockets for him to yield his treasure with a good-natured smile.

Victorine, with custom, grew bolder as she darted into the gloomy hall of what she still called "a nasty little house." Sometimes she even lingered a moment, just to prove her courage to Miss Maybourn, who waited anxiously outside.

She always felt nervous when the dainty figure of her charge vanished from sight, and sighed with relief at its reappearance.

One particularly bright morning Victorine kept her waiting longer than usual, and she could see through the open door the little white figure talking with a tall woman in black.

Mrs. Tempest had telegraphed for a specialist who saw Herminie in London. The child was worse and the mother grew desperate. She kept running to the door at every sound in her eagerness for a reply. It was thus she caught the fairy, red-handed.

"What are you doing?" she asked.

Her grey eyes were full of tears, she was white to the lips and trembling. Her pitiable look of distress instantly broke down Victorine's shyness. She held out a minute hand, and looked up sympathetically from the shade of her white bonnet.



"SHE BENT DOWN AND KISSED VICTORINE."

"Oh, please don't cry!" whispered the little voice; "I have brought some things for Herminie, only I didn't want anyone to know. You see, my mamma said I wasn't to play with her; I may only talk to the children in the hotel, and not to the children on the pier."

The genuine concern in that small pink and white face touched Mrs. Tempest deeply. She bent down and kissed Victorine.

"You have been so kind, so kind!" she said, brokenly. "Dear little girl, why did you think of my Herminie?"

"I don't know," answered Victorine, "but I suppose I love her very much."

Mrs. Tempest remembered that Sunday morning. She could see again the child waving, and hear Herminie's plaintive question, "Is it wicked to have an upholstery place?"

"Telegram!"

The word fell with an ominous sound on

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Mrs. Tempest's ear. She tore the envelope open in a frenzy of anxiety.

"Dr. Fairholme has left for his holiday on the Continent," she read.

A groan escaped her.

Dr. Fairholme away! It seemed to seal Herminie's doom. He not only thoroughly understood her case, but was a personal friend and aware of their circumstances. He had shown them great kindness in the past, and Mrs. Tempest could have trusted him not to press her for the money.

She forgot Victorine as she turned away with a stifled sob.

"The London doctor can't come!" she said to the landlady, who appeared on the stairs, and her voice vibrated with a dull misery that filled Victorine with a sense of terror.

Without another word the child fled away, haunted by the sound of that melancholy voice, followed by the echo of a deep, low sob.

Silently she accompanied Miss Maybourn to the beach, and, seated under a breakwater, thought out many things.

Perhaps some guiding angel whispered in her ear, perhaps the song of the sea inspired the little mind. She was thinking especially of a gentleman with a pointed beard and a little bald patch on the top of his head, who had come the previous day to the Hotel Imperial.

Her father pointed him out to her mother as an extremely celebrated London physician. He occupied a suite of rooms next to theirs; he had a very grand, imposing air. Several times she had seen him through the open door, reading, or writing at a table strewn with papers.

Suddenly she grew tired of the beach, and begged Miss Maybourn to take her home.



"'IF YOU PLEASE,' SHE SAID, 'I WANT TO TELL YOU ABOUT HERMINIE.'"

Dr. Grainger felt he required rest. A great reader, he loved to fling himself into an arm-chair by the flower-laden balcony and enjoy the companionship of a good book.

It was stiflingly hot, and he had left the door of his sitting-room open.

So engrossed was he that the soft patter of little feet hastily approaching his chair failed to attract his attention.

It was not until a small hand gently tapped the back of his book that he looked up, to find a pair of pleading eyes gazing earnestly into his.

For the moment he wondered if he were fully awake, for the beautiful child in her dainty attire looked like some vision of the senses. The glowing cheeks and sunny curls made a pleasing picture, while those tiny fingers still rested with absolute confidence on the heavy volume.

"Oh, if you please," she said, "I want to tell you about Herminie."

"Herminie!" The name came echoing down a vista of long years. He had once known a "Herminie" in his early youth, a tall, proud girl who had scorned his love, a girl with eyes of marvellous depth and soft, rippling hair. He drew the child nearer; it was odd she was not afraid of him, a grey-haired stranger, with lines of deep study and thought searing his brow.

"Well?" he queried, touching her curls.

"Herminie is very ill," continued Victorine, breathlessly, "and they can't get a doctor from London to come and make her well, so I thought I would ask you to go. Miss Maybourn says they lodge in that nasty little house at the end of the parade because they have no money, and Herminie hasn't any pretty clothes, so I mustn't play with her.

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But I love her very much, though we only made friends one morning on the pier. Her mother was crying to-day, and I felt I wanted to help her ever so much, and that made me think of you. I asked Miss Maybourn if doctors cost a lot of money, and she said 'Yes, they are ruinous.' I shouldn't like poor Mrs. Tempest to be bothered about that, so I thought I would tell you I have three half-crowns left in my money-box. Would they do instead of Mrs. Tempest having to pay?"

A queer expression flitted over the doctor's face.

He remembered the "Herminie" he once knew and loved had married some years later a young and exceedingly reckless Captain Tempest against the wishes of her family. After that he heard nothing more of her; she had sunk into oblivion.

"Tell me the name of the house," he said, rising quickly and letting his book fall with painful force on Victorine's toes. She winced with the pain, but he never noticed her.

"Sea View Lodge," she gasped, as he snatched up his hat and vanished through the open door.

Victorine watched him, her eyes beaming with gratitude. She piped out "Thank you," but the room was empty; only the walls heard.

V.

THE great doctor, arriving at a critical moment of Herminie's illness, brought all his skill to bear upon her difficult and complicated case.

It seemed to Mrs. Tempest little short of a miracle that this friend of her youth, now so celebrated, should appear as if in direct answer to her prayer for Herminie's recovery.

Night and day he attended the suffering child till the crisis passed and he pronounced her out of danger.

She was sleeping peacefully, and Mrs. Tempest for the first time found herself alone in the small drawing-room with Dr. Grainger.

"How can I ever thank you or show my gratitude?" she said, her voice trembling with deep emotion.



"HOW CAN I EVER THANK YOU?"

He looked in her face, seeing the same fathomless eyes and pure alabaster skin, while the same soft ripple played across her hair.

A tender expression, a certain quivering of her lips, a little, pathetic gesture gave him encouragement to answer boldly.

"I don't want gratitude, Herminie, I only want yourself."

She drew a step nearer, and her head drooped, such a proud, daintily shaped head, looking like a broken lily in a storm.

A moment later the tired spirit found its refuge in a lover's arms.

"Tell me," she said at last, "who was the friend that sent you to me—who told you I was here?"

"A tiny child who stole into my room like a fairy. She was staying at the Imperial, and left this morning with her parents. She used to watch so eagerly for news, though she told me she had only met Herminie once. After I saw her drive away I inquired for letters, and found an hotel envelope awaiting me—in it were three half-crowns!"

A smile of intense amusement dawned on his lips, and a kindly expression smoothed the lines which love might yet erase.

But the smile and the tender look just at that moment were all for the little girl in the lace frock.

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From Behind the Speaker's Chair.

LXXV.

(VIEWED BY HENRY W. LUCY.)

THE SPEAKER'S OPPORTUNITY.

IN the first year of her reign, Queen Victoria, following precedent, not only opened Parliament in person, but in due time went down to Westminster to prorogue it. There is some curiosity as to whether the King, who, since he came to the Throne, has twice read his own Speech in the House of Lords, will grace the close of the Session by his presence. That he did not do so last year is not conclusive on the point, since the death of the Empress of Germany plunged the Royal Family into fresh mourning.

The Sovereign's appearance on the scene at the close of a Session would be interesting, amongst other things, as reviving an ancient custom dimly, and not quite accurately, recalled by the present occupant of the Chair in the House of Commons. Speaking at the Mansion House early in the Session, Mr. Gully stated his belief that "the last Speaker who had the opportunity of airing his eloquence at the prorogation of Parliament was Mr. Manners Sutton, who ceased to be Speaker in 1835." As Mr. Sidney Lee, whose knowledge, like the "National Biography" he edited, is encyclopædic, pointed out, this custom survived to a much later date. So recently as the Session of 1854, when for the last time Queen Victoria went down to prorogue Parliament, the Speaker harangued Her Majesty at length on the course of the Session.

In olden times, it being the Speaker's only chance of letting himself go, the performance was elaborate and extensive. Its opportunity was, however, strictly correlative with the presence of the Sovereign. No Sovereign, no speech. Possibly ruthless observance of the privilege may have had something to do with the abandonment of the Royal visit, and may influence His Majesty in contemplation of the propriety of resuming the practice.

In the first two years of her reign, 1837 and 1838, Queen Victoria, proroguing Parliament, was addressed at length by Speaker Abercromby, standing at the Bar in wig and gown, escorted by the Mace, accompanied by the Chaplain, and inconveniently backed up from behind by a mob of members. The last Speaker who monopolized enjoyment of the privilege was Mr. Shaw-Lefevre, afterwards Viscount Eversley, and up to a recent time still with us. He it was who, on the 12th of August, 1854, made the last of these speeches to Queen Victoria, then in the prime of life and the fulness of domestic happiness. The oration, preserved in the sepulchre of Hansard, dealt largely with the Crimean War, then in progress. If Mr. Gully were called upon by the presence of the King to revive the custom he would, by striking coincidence, find a theme at hand in a war far exceeding that of the Crimea, alike in duration, in loss of blood, and of treasure.

AN ANXIOUS TIME.

When diaries and letters now in manuscript leap to light a dramatic story will be told of profound anxiety in high quarters at a period preceding by three months the death of Queen Victoria. The actual condition of Her Majesty was carefully hidden from the public eye. It was only too well known by the Royal Family and its *entourage*. In October, 1900, "the war being over," Lord Salisbury and his colleagues decided to rush a General Election. Even whilst it was taking place the Queen visibly sank. No one could say in the morning that collapse would not come before sundown. Day by day the General Election went forward. The difficulty was that should the Queen die before it was completed the several elections taken up to date would become void. Others arranged for would not take place. The old Parliament, dissolved on the 25th of September, would have sudden resurrection, meeting at Westminster to take the oath to the new Sovereign. Dissolution must be repeated, and the General Election taken again.

When all the boroughs and counties on the mainland had polled there still remained Shetland and Orkney. This interval of a few days was the climax of anxiety. Had the demise of the Crown occurred whilst Orkney and Shetland were preparing for the poll, all the work would have been undone. The General Election, as we know, ended without a hitch, at least in this respect. But the elector throughout the kingdom little knew how closely his race with Death was watched from Windsor and Downing Street.

Another better known but already almost forgotten difficulty arose in the earliest days of the still young Parliament. By an Act of

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William III. it was decreed that dissolution should within the period of six months follow demise of the Crown. In 1867 this inconvenient and quite unnecessary injunction was abolished. In the same Session separate Bills were passed reforming the law in this respect in Scotland and Ireland. The sapient drafters of the Bill relating to England, bearing in mind this fact, introduced a clause in the English Act providing that it "shall not extend to Scotland or to Ireland." On the face of it the Act of 1867 enforced a new General Election in Scotland and Ireland before July, 1901, that being the limit of the six months following the death of Queen Victoria. The matter was seriously argued, was indeed submitted for the opinion of the Law Officers of the Crown. This was given on the common-sense lines that the three several Acts should be construed together.



THE LORD CHANCELLOR HAS A NARROW ESCAPE.

Thus it came to pass that the English and Scotch Acts were operative in their respective countries, the restrictive clause in the English Act being ignored. The incident is curiously instructive as illustrating the slips occasionally made in drafting Acts of Parliament, and the readiness with which they are overlooked in both Houses.

A NARROW ESCAPE.

It is a saddening reflection that within the memory of the present generation the nearest approach to bad language spoken in the House of Lords should have come from the Lord Chancellor. The event befell on one of the closing nights of last Session. The subject under discussion was the Royal Declaration Bill, which Lord Rosebery attacked in a speech of unusual vigour. It was the outcome of the work of a committee over which the Lord Chancellor presided. Lord Rosebery, *inter alia*, charged the committee with being unduly sensitive to criticism.

"I am not at all sensitive to the noble earl's observations," said the Lord Chancellor, "and I do not believe there is one member of the committee who cares a——"

Happily the Lord Chancellor stopped, almost as he breathed the objectionable word, involuntarily formed on the lips of noble lords listening. A burst of laughter giving him pause, he continued: "Well, I do not want to use disagreeable expressions, and I will say there is no member who cares for the noble earl's criticisms." This was felt to be rather a weak conclusion compared with what the sentence earlier promised. It was at least more Parliamentary.



"A BELTED EARL THUMPING THE TABLE."

AMENITIES IN THE LORDS.

The Lord Chancellor was in particularly lively form at this sitting. Lord Rosebery's argument was that the form of declaration recommended by the Bill was so phrased that anyone might take it. "Do you suppose," he said, "that Charles II. would not have made this declaration with a ready voice and an easy conscience? And yet Charles II.," he added, with tremendous thump on the table sufficient in force to have taken off the head of Charles I., "died in communion with the Church of Rome."

Noble lords looked on with raised eyebrows and

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slightly curled lips. This sort of thing was all very well in the House of Commons. They had heard of—some had seen—Mr. Gladstone standing at the table whacking the brass-bound box or beating the palm of his left hand with his right, with noise that almost drowned his ordered speech. But to have a belted earl thumping the table in the House of Lords was quite a new thing. It came nearer to presage of abolition of the institution than anything else uttered at Northampton or elsewhere. The Lord Chancellor, in a concluding sentence of his speech, neatly phrased reproach of this flagrant departure from House of Lords' form.

"I feel," he said, "as strongly on this matter as does the noble earl, though I admit I have no piece of furniture within my reach to enable me by strength of muscle to supply lack of argument."

THE LIE DIRECT.

It was assumed and asserted at the time that Mr. Dillon beat the record when early this Session he gave the lie direct to Mr. Chamberlain. That is not the case. The record was established by the late Dr. Tanner, though to give Mr. Dillon his due he freshened it up by the embroidery of an adjective. It was towards the end of the Session of 1895 that Dr. Tanner broke out. From the opening of the sitting he had been in ominous state of unrest. According to his habit it developed the form of extreme desire that other members should observe orderly conduct. Once, Mr. Balfour venturing to smile at some bombast on the part of Mr. John Redmond, Dr. Tanner rose and protested that he "felt bound to call attention to the indecorous behaviour of the gentleman who is Leader of the House." Later, Mr. Balfour, dealing with the state of public business, made the obvious remark that at the period of the Session reached it was waste of time for private members to bring in new Bills. To Dr. Tanner's active logical mind this irresistibly suggested affairs in the far East.

"Does the right hon. gentleman," he shouted, sternly regarding Mr. Balfour, "really intend to try and prevent the murder of any more missionaries in China?"

After this, anything might be expected, and it was not long in coming. In debate on the Address—the first Session of the new Parliament opened, of all dates, on the 12th of August—Mr. Harrington observed that the late Government had run away from Home Rule.

"That's a lie!" shouted Dr. Tanner.

The Speaker was up in a minute, calling upon him to withdraw the offensive word and apologize.

"No, no," said the Doctor, remaining seated and still burning with desire that everything should be done in order, "I cannot get up, you know, so long as you are on your legs."



"JUDAS! JUDAS!"

That was indisputable, it being a serious breach of order for a member to rise whilst the Speaker is upstanding. Without more ado Dr. Tanner was named. In the absence of Mr. Balfour, Mr. Chamberlain moved the resolution of suspension. The Doctor refusing to withdraw, the Serjeant-at-Arms was bidden to remove him. As he approached, the apostle of order rose and walked down the gangway. At sight of Mr. Chamberlain seated on the Treasury Bench a storm of fury shook him. Drawing himself up to full height, stretching forth his arm as if levelling a pistol at the head of the Colonial Secretary, he yelled, "Judas! Judas! Judas!" and so went forth.

This was his last prominent appearance on the Parliamentary stage.

TWELVE O'CLOCK WITH A DIFFERENCE.

What is familiarly known in the House of Commons as the Twelve o'Clock Rule is commonly regarded as a modern invention. But there is nothing new under the sun, and this particular product is at least two and a half centuries old. In the Journals of the House there will be found, under date 1645, the following Standing Order: "That no new motion of any business whatsoever shall be made after twelve

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o'clock, and that Mr. Speaker should not hear any new motion after twelve o'clock." Two years later, in order to make the matter more clear, it was ordered that "as soon as the clock strikes twelve the House shall rise."

There is, of course, this important difference between the two conditions of things. Whilst with us the Twelve o'Clock Rule means midnight, in the seventeenth century it struck at noon.



IN THE BULL-FIELD.

Members who, in debate on the new Procedure Rules, grumbled at the prospect of meeting as early as two in the afternoon will be pleased to be reminded that in the time of James I. eight o'clock in the morning was the hour at which the Speaker took the Chair. Once at least in the spacious times of Queen Elizabeth they met at 6 a.m. That was a special occasion, when, having obtained permission of Her Majesty to attend at eight, the Commons held a preliminary meeting "to treat on what shall be delivered touching the reasons of their proceedings." In 1614 the House met at 7 a.m., an order that remained in force for twenty-eight years. But the wind was tempered to the shorn lamb, inasmuch as the Stuart Kings were accustomed to interpose prolonged recesses in the sittings of their Parliaments.

A PRIME BULL.

Last Session 6,448 questions appeared on the paper, being raised to a minimum of the round 10,000 by supplementary inquiries. For the most part these were of the style and character of that delightful one put on a February afternoon this year by Mr. Field, addressed to the Chief Secretary for Ireland. Mr. Wyndham having replied to the question on the paper, the member for St. Patrick's Division of Dublin rose in all the majesty of a spotless shirt-front and protuberant cuffs.

"Mr. Speaker, sir," he said, in tragic tones, "arising out of that answer, I wish to say I did not hear what the right hon. gentleman said."

For a bull that is about as perfect an animal as is bred out of Ireland. It is one of the rules feebly governing the putting of questions that, when a reply has been given by a Minister, further interrogation is permissible only in direct connection with the answer. Whenever an Irish member wants to put a supplementary question—and he invariably does—he prefaces it with a formula "arising out of that answer." Hence Mr. Field's stumbling.

THE KING'S SPEECH.

In the earliest days of his reign King Edward VII. introduced a new order of things in connection with the Speech from the Throne at the opening of the Session. During the reign of Queen Victoria it was the practice not only to furnish copies of the document to the Leaders of the Opposition in both Houses for the information of their colleagues, but to communicate a full *précis* to the newspapers. By order of the King, whilst the Leaders of the Opposition were last Session and this provided with a copy of the Speech, which they read before dinner to their guests, the newspapers were left to their own devices in the effort to forecast the Speech.

This is even a wider departure from the practice that obtained in the days of George IV. No secret was then made about the Speech, copies being circulated among members some days before the Session opened. Canning mentions, in a passage quoted by Mr. Walpole, a curious practice that obtained in his day. "It was the custom," he said, "the night before the commencement of a Session to read to such members as might think proper to assemble to hear it, at a place called the Cockpit, the Speech with which the King's Ministers had advised His Majesty to open Session." Cockpit and custom have both disappeared.

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The original Cockpit was part of the building of ancient Whitehall, and came in course of time to be devoted to the business and convenience of the Treasury.

"ADEQUATE" APOLOGY.

In Parliamentary records the longest drawn out apology made by a member of the House of Commons I find in contemporary records of more than sixty years ago. The offender was Mr. Kearsley, member for Wigan. He seems to have been, in personal appearance as in other respects, a character. He is described as having "a little, round, pug-looking face, with an ample harvest of black, bushy hair, with whiskers to match; a little, thick-set man with an inclination to corpulence." Notice is taken of "an expressive look of self-complacency irradiating his globularly-formed, country-complexioned countenance, while his small, bright eyes ever peered triumphantly over his little cocked-up nose."



A FANCY PORTRAIT.

In the Session of 1836, the House being in Committee on the Stamp Duty and Excise, Mr. Kearsley, following Mr. Roebuck, appealing directly to Lord John Russell, asked "with what pleasure he had listened to the disgusting speech of the honourable and learned member for Bath." The Chairman of Committees, Mr. Bernal (known to later Parliaments as Bernal Osborne), ruled the expression out of order and called for its withdrawal.

"Sir," said Mr. Kearsley, "a more disgusting speech I never heard."

Thereupon, amid shouts of "Order!" he left his seat, and with a profound bow to the Chair, and a gracious wave of farewell with his right hand, made for the door. A crowd standing there blocked his way and Mr. Kearsley returned to his seat. Mr. Paul Methuen, grandfather of our wounded Lord Methuen, who sat through several Parliaments as member for Wiltshire, insisted upon retraction of the offensive word and apology. Mr. Kearsley was on his legs again before the Chairman could say a word, and cried aloud, "Paul, Paul, why persecutest thou me?" In the end, after much pressure, Mr. Kearsley withdrew the word but did not apologize.

EARLY CLOSING.

In this same Parliament sat Mr. Brotherton, member for Salford, who distinguished himself in a more sane manner. In boyhood a factory hand, he in course of time ran a factory of his own, which made him one of the richest of Manchester men. His predominant idea in connection with Parliamentary life was to get members off to bed by half-past twelve. Session after Session he was in his place, and on the hand of the clock passing the half-hour after midnight he rose and moved the adjournment. If a big debate were in progress he refrained from interference. His conviction was that no new business should be taken after half-past twelve, wherein he was nearly half a century before his time.

Old members familiar with the House in the seventies, when, if the adjournment took place before two o'clock in the morning, it was counted a sort of half-holiday, will recall the enormous relief the adoption of Mr. Brotherton's resolution brought with it. The House having with immense difficulty been brought to pass a rule forbidding the undertaking of fresh business after half-past twelve soon moved the hand of the clock back to midnight, and finally reached the existing beneficent rule that peremptorily, even to the shutting-up of a member on his legs, closes debate at that hour. So absolutely has fashion changed within the memory of many seated in the present House that, whereas thirteen years ago the adjournment rarely took place before 1 a.m., members to-day resent extension of a sitting even five minutes beyond midnight. It frequently happens that when the Twelve o'Clock Rule has been solemnly suspended, giving members leave to sit till any hour of the morning they please, the pending division has taken place immediately after midnight, and by half-past twelve the lights were out.

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The Ipswich Express.

By G. H. Page.

"COULDN'T you find me a carriage with a lady in it?" said Lily Freeston, a little doubtfully, as the porter opened the door of a first-class carriage which was quite empty, and began to pack her dressing-bag and roll of rugs into the rack.

"Well, miss," said he, apologetically, "though there are a good many people going by this train, there are not many going first-class. But very likely some may come yet, for there's still twenty minutes before you're off, and I'll look out for any ladies, and if I can manage it I'll put them in here."

He spoke with an eye to his tip, and the grateful Lily at once gave him a shilling. Then he went off and forgot all about her in the doing of other jobs, and the carriage remained empty.

In a way Lily found it pleasant to be alone, and could she have felt certain of remaining alone during the whole two hours of her journey she would have been quite happy. But it was the uncertainty, the possibility of having to travel with some objectionable companion, which gave her a slight sense of uneasiness.

She chose her seat in the corner facing the engine, but she did not sit down at once. She stood instead at the open door, watching the crowd hurrying about the platform. There were plenty of people, as the porter had said, but all, obviously, were going second or third class. There were mothers with large families of children, there were schoolboys and young people, there was a group of Salvation lasses, a clergyman, and a much-flustered old lady, carrying a bird-cage in one hand and a band-box in the other. Her perturbation arose from the fact that she had not seen her trunk put into the luggage-van with her own eyes, and it was in vain that an irascible porter insisted that he, at least, knew he had done so with his own hands. The old lady was neither to be soothed nor to be intimidated. She appealed volubly to the station-master, who happened to be standing at hand.

Lily could see her action, could see her gesticulation, while not hearing what she said. And the girl couldn't help smiling at the way in which the old lady waved the band-box and the bird-cage about, couldn't help wondering how the bird, beneath the green-baize cover, was enjoying his tempestuous experiences. Finally, it seemed to Lily that the station-master invited the old lady to accompany him to the luggage-van and verify the whereabouts of the box herself, for he walked off towards the rear of the train and the old lady trotted after him.

By this time most of the other passengers had taken their places and the platform was nearly empty. Only a nice-looking young man in a grey summer suit remained, and he kept looking now at his watch and now through each of the station entrances as he sauntered by them, as if he were awaiting the arrival of a friend.

"No, *she* won't come," said Lily to herself, as she watched him. "I'm afraid she was so long doing her hair—and of course she wanted to do it extra well to-day—that she missed the train. You will have to go without her or to wait for the next. But you look much too nice to go without her. I'm sure you'll wait for the next."



"SHE WENT ON WITH THE NARRATIVE."

A guard carrying a green flag came along banging-to the carriage-doors, and Lily sat down in her corner, satisfied at last that she was going to make the journey alone; for after leaving Liverpool Street the train did not stop again until it reached Ipswich.

She did not anticipate being dull. First of all, the mere sensation of being carried along at

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the rate of sixty miles an hour was an amusement to her; then she liked looking out of the window at the hamlets and country houses flying past her and imagining little stories about the people who lived in them; and finally, when she should tire of this, she had plenty of magazines and papers with which to beguile the time.

She had also the letter home to her aunt which she had begun in the train coming up from Tunbridge, and she thought she would first go on with that. So she took her bag down from the rack, found her little writing-pad and pencil, and putting the point of the latter between her pretty lips to darken it went on with the narrative of her travel adventures where she had broken off:—

"I got across London from Charing Cross to Liverpool Street all right, and the cabman was very nice; and when I asked him 'How much?' he said: 'Well, since it's you, miss, we'll say five shillings,' which was very kind of him, wasn't it? and not a bit extortionate, as Jack said he would be, for it was really an immense way here, and through such crowded, horrid streets that it must have been most difficult to drive. Now I am in the Ipswich train in a carriage all to myself, for I couldn't find any other ladies to travel with, as you wished; but it doesn't really matter, for I don't feel a bit lonely or fright——"

At that instant the door was snatched open, a bag was flung in, and a tall, black-bearded man, with a big cigar in his mouth, dashed in after it. He stumbled over Lily's feet without a word of apology, shut the door behind him with a furious slam, and precipitated himself into the farthest opposite corner of the carriage. Lily looked at him in amazement and dismay. Really this was worse than anything she could have possibly foreseen. It was simply impossible for her to travel in a carriage with a man who smoked, for the smell of smoke always made her ill, always gave her a bad headache. She could not sit ten minutes in her cousin Jack's smoking-room without the atmosphere affecting her. To be shut up for two hours in the company of that big cigar was absolutely out of the question. Yet what was she to do? Was it possible for her to change carriages? She gave a despairing glance at her various possessions scattered over the seats, at her heavy dressing-bag, at her big bundle of wraps and rugs up in the rack opposite her, and which she could not even lift down herself. No, it was impossible that she could change carriages in time, and yet what on earth was she to do?



"HE PRECIPITATED HIMSELF INTO THE FARTHEST OPPOSITE CORNER."

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She could think of nothing better than an appeal to the stranger's good feeling, since he, at least, could get into another carriage without any difficulty. And, no doubt, he had made a mistake in entering this carriage instead of the next one. She remembered now to have noticed that the next compartment was a smoking-compartment, and probably in his hurry he had mistaken the doors.

He looked a gentleman, Lily decided, although she immediately discovered that he was a very odd-looking man, too; while certainly his mode of entrance had not been over-courteous. Still, she felt perfectly sure that he would be willing to move himself rather than put her to such inconvenience and discomfort.

"Pardon me," she said, with timid courage, his upper lip drew back in an ugly way, reminding her of some ill-tempered dog.

"You object to me smoking?" he asked, speaking with a strong foreign accent, in a hard, curious, unmodulated voice.

"Well—yes, I do," said Lily, bravely. "It makes me feel ill, and that is why I came into this carriage, which is not a smoking-carriage. But there is a smoking-compartment on that side, next door. You will have time to change, if you are quick. Please, please, be quick, and change!"

But the stranger merely put back his cigar between his teeth, and continued to turn on her a fierce and flickering gaze.

"You object to me smoking?" he repeated, just as before. "You make me observations? You tell me go into anuzzer carriage? Now, look he-aire."



"HE POINTED THE WEAPON STRAIGHT AT LILY'S FACE."

"but I think you have made a mistake? This is not a smoking-carriage."

There was something really extremely odd in the appearance of this foreign-looking man, who might be French, who might be Italian; who wore a soft hat, a voluminous "bat's-wing" cape, and a sparse, stubbly black beard. There was something odd and repellent, too, in the damp white skin, the thick black eyebrows, the black, flickering, staring eyes, which were now fixed upon her, and which filled her with nervous trepidations.

He took his cigar from his mouth when she had begun to speak, and one corner of

He slipped a hand into a pocket beneath his cloak and produced a tiny revolver, which he laid beside him on the arm of the seat, keeping his hand upon it.

"I allow no one in ze world to interfere wiz me, to make me remarks, and I carry this about wiz me," he pointed the weapon straight at Lily's face, "to give a lesson to those peoples who do not let me alone."

At first Lily had gone crimson with surprise at being spoken to in such a manner. Never in the world had any man answered her with such rudeness before. But when he produced the pistol, then she had felt the warm

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blood rush back from her beating head to her heart. She grew pale, she grew cold, she grew paler still. For suddenly she understood the awful truth. The man was mad! She was shut up alone in a carriage with a madman!

And at the very instant that she realized the full horror of the situation the train began to move slowly and smoothly out of the station.

Terror kept her rigid as a figure of stone, and it was well for her that it was so. For though the madman's eye was unsteady, though it flickered the whole time, still he never removed it from her; he kept his hand always on the handle of the little pistol by his side.

She understood, intuitively, that were she to scream, were she to open the door, were she to try to pull the cord of communication with the guard—were she, in fact, to make any attempt to obtain help, he would fire at once. The desire for violence was clearly expressed in his glance.

And probably, even although she sat perfectly quiet, he would kill her all the same. And she looked at the glittering muzzle of the tiny weapon, and wondered how soon her death-blow would spring out from it. Heavens! It was too horrible, too impossible, that she, Lily Freeston, so young and so happy, with so many people who were fond of her, with Aunt Mary thinking about her probably at that very moment, with her friend Maggie Parker expecting her at Ipswich, with so many pretty frocks in her trunk to be worn during her visit, that she should find herself in imminent peril of her life, shut up alone in a railway carriage with a madman.

It was like some horrible nightmare, and yet it was worse than any nightmare she had ever suffered from, for it was actual fact, it was actually true.

What could she do?

The advertisements on the walls of the station began to slide past her, those advertisements of soap, of blacking, of beer, which she knew so well, which she had read hundreds of times in hundreds of idle, empty moments, and amidst all the confused, troubled, agonized thoughts which seemed to struggle and shout together in her brain came the ridiculous little regret that this was the last time she would ever read these familiar advertisements, ever be bored by their monotonous reiterations. For in another minute she would be carried away from all aid, from all human proximity, out into the open country, alone with this madman, and whatever then happened her cries would be lost in the noise of the rushing train, which would not again stop until it reached Ipswich.

Her fingers trembled on the pencil which she still held poised over her unfinished letter, and suddenly an inspiration came to her—a Heaven-sent inspiration which thrilled her with a last faint hope of help, which comforted her with the idea of, at least, making her desperate circumstances known to some fellow-being.

She carried this idea out with a coolness and courage which were Heaven-sent too.

All this while, and it appears to be a certain while in the reading, although in point of time it passed in a very few seconds, she had her eyes raised to the madman's, who watched her interrogatively, expecting an answer to his information. Now she gave one.

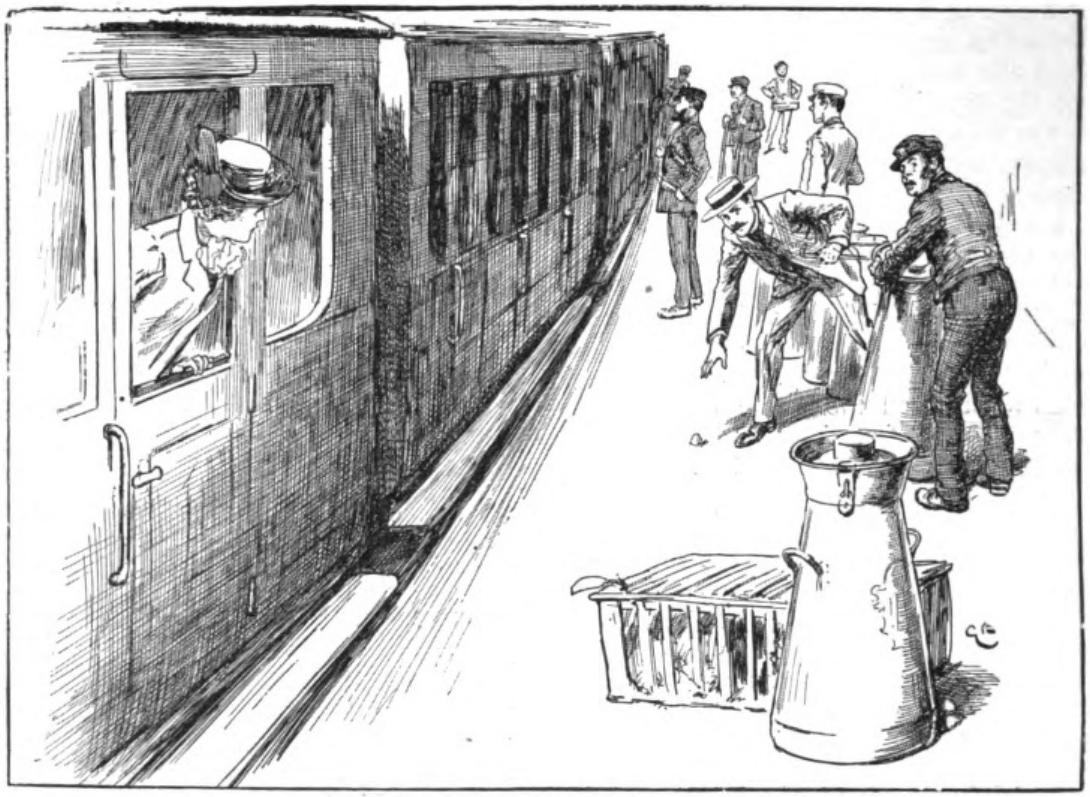
"Very well," she said, gently, and she was astonished to detect no alteration in her voice, it sounded just as usual. "You shall go on smoking and I will go on with my letter."

Now the writing-pad consisted of detachable sheets, which could be turned back as each page was finished and all held together, or any separate page could be easily pulled out. Lily turned a page now, and wrote on the next one: "Pray help me, I am so frightened" (an unexpected termination this to the gay courage of her unfinished sentence to her aunt), and then added another couple of words, any words, nonsense words, and promptly scratched them through, as if she had made a mistake. Immediately, with a well-assumed little frown of vexation, she tore out the page and crumpled it up in her hand.

Now she rose with an air of indifference and let her glance fall out of the window. There were the long boards of the platform slipping by her, running away to converge in a single point in the distance; there was a porter—the very porter to whom she had given the shilling—rolling and rattling milk-cans from one part of the station to the other; there stood the young man in grey, still waiting, and talking now with the station-master. Everything was calm, placid, ordinary; everyone was absolutely indifferent to her peril. And yet she was being carried away from all security, from all calmness, to a horrible uncertainty, most likely to a violent death.

The young man in grey happened to raise

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"SHE HAD SEEN THE YOUNG MAN PICK IT UP."

his eyes to hers, although he was a long way from her, far down the moving platform.

With apparent carelessness she threw the little ball of paper out and sat down again to write. But she had thrown it with a definite aim, she had seen it roll to the feet of the two men, she had seen the young man pick it up. He was smoothing it out in his fingers when the station passed out of sight.

So far her scheme had worked successfully. But what result would it have? Could it have any result? What would the young man do? What would the station-master do? Was it possible for them to do anything at all? They would probably think it some silly girl's joke.

Yet even if they believed her to be in need of help, what could they do?

And she sat pretending to continue her letter, while asking herself with anguish whether there were really any means of overtaking an express train, of stopping her? Perhaps they would telegraph on to the next station and have her stopped by signal, but perhaps the next station was ever so far off, and before they reached it she might be already dead.

An unconquerable fascination made her look up, to see the man in the corner watching her with a cruel malignancy while his fingers caressed the handle of the revolver; and she bent again over her writing-pad, on which she traced mechanically nonsense words, while she said to herself: "Now he will fire. Before I get to the end of the next line he will fire. How unhappy poor auntie will be when she hears the news! I suppose she will read of it in to-morrow's paper." And the girl felt her eyes fill with tears as she imagined her Aunt Mary's grief.

A shadow fell across the paper. The window was suddenly darkened. Someone was standing outside the carriage on the footboard looking in over the door.

It was the young man in grey, and when Lily recognised his fair, strong, and handsome English face, so much passionate relief and gratitude welled up into her wet blue eyes that he instantly saw he had done right in obeying the impulse which told him to spring upon the flying train. He had thrust Lily's paper into the hands of the station-master, had run along the platform, and leaped upon the footboard of one of the rear carriages as it whirled past him. The rest had been a mere matter of agility and nerve. Now, another glance into the carriage revealed to him the state of the case.

He turned the handle, stepped up, and sat down opposite the young girl.

"Well, I very nearly missed the train this

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time!" said he, with courteous carelessness. "Hadn't you given me up?"

Lily gave a little gasp, and then understood he was assuming the rôle of brother or friend to give himself the right of protecting her.

"Yes," she told him. "I had given up hope altogether," and there was real truth in the words.

Watching his face intently, she read his wishes.

"Will you not come and sit over here?" she asked him, and began clearing her things away from the place beside her.

He changed places in the most natural way possible, and appeared to pay no attention at all to the traveller in the far corner. But Lily knew that the move had been made for the very purpose of observing him, and by a little sign she indicated to the young man in grey the pistol lying under the Frenchman's hand, and now half hidden by a fold of his cloak.

The man was still smoking, while he stared in front of him with an assumed air of mental preoccupation, although every now and then a glint from his flickering eye fell upon his companions in the carriage.

The train every moment was increasing in speed. The carriage swayed and rattled, the telegraph-posts leaped past in quick succession, an express coming from the other direction seemed one long line of glittering windows, one long, continuous roar.

Had the young man in grey seen the pistol? Lily could not be sure, for he gave no answering sign, and his manner was exceedingly bright and irrelevant.



"IT WAS THE YOUNG MAN IN GREY."

"By Jove, that was a very close thing," said he. "And if I hadn't come by this train I don't think the girls would ever have forgiven me. They make such a point of it. But now I want you," he continued, "to keep a look-out on the opposite window. We are going to pass directly a very extraordinary sight. We are going to pass a house built without any front to it, by a man who is consumptive, and hopes to cure himself on the open-air system. It looks precisely like a dolls' house with the door open. You can see into all the rooms. There! There it is! Do you see it?" he cried eagerly, getting up to point it out, and Lily jumped up and looked with all her eyes, and the Frenchman half rose and looked too.

Was there such a house as the young man described? Lily could not tell, for the train had reached full speed, and the whole countryside wheeled and curved and spun into view, and reeled away again behind them, before she had time to detect any one particular thing. But in the same instant that her bewildered

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eyes searched vainly for this house, the young man in grey had sprung across the carriage, had stooped down and seized the pistol, and had flung it far out of the window over the Frenchman's head.



"STILL THE MEN WRESTLED, AND STILL THE TRAIN RUSHED FORWARD."

"Oh, take care!" cried Lily, for she saw him turn in a paroxysm of fury upon the young man in grey, and the next moment the two were locked in a fierce struggle on the carriage floor.

The train shrieked, and rattled, and banged, the two men wrestled with clenched teeth one to overpower the other, and Lily, standing as far out of the way as she could, pressed back her cries with trembling little hands.

Everything in the carriage was overset; newspapers, books, and papers were scattered on the floor. The maniac clutching hold of the bar of the net-rack to prevent his opponent from throwing him brought the whole affair down. Down with it came his own bag, insecurely fastened and hurriedly packed. Its mouth opened and it vomited forth a strange flood of heterogeneous contents: pomatum, socks, brushes, soap, medicine bottles full and empty, china dogs and shepherdesses looking like a hasty collection from a mantelpiece or chiffonnier, a large piece of bread, and quantities of fine cigars, which rolled into every corner of the carriage or were trodden under foot. And still the men wrestled, and still the train rushed forward, and Lily, very pale and tremulous, waited for the end. But she never felt one moment's doubt of the strength or capacity of the young man in grey. Nor, embarrassed as the maniac was by the heavy hanging cloak, was there ever any chance of his doing harm.

"If I could but manage to tie his legs," said the young man, who had now got him pinioned in a corner by the arms, "I think it would settle him," and he looked about him for some sort of ligature. "Haven't you got some rugs? Then take one of the straps. Now, try to pass it round his ankles here. Yes! Now once more, and pull tight. Tighter still! There, that's right. Give me the other strap, and we'll put it round his arms—so."

The man lay on the floor of the carriage securely bound. He lay quiet and silent, only his eyes gave sign of life. And with these eyes still burning with fury and madness he followed the movements of the young people.

Lily was filled with pity for him.

"Poor creature," she said, "how terrible! How wretched he looks! Do you think him in pain? Are those straps hurting him, perhaps? Do put this cushion under his

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head. But surely we are slowing down? We are going to stop."

And the train really was drawing up at an unimportant little station, where perhaps no express train had ever stopped before, and the officials of this station came running along the footboard even before she had stopped, looking into all the carriages. And there was a great commotion when they came to Lily's carriage, which looked almost as if it had been wrecked, and there were hurried questions and explanations, and much commiseration for the young lady.

But the train was bound to reach Ipswich at a fixed hour. There could be no delaying. Two guards were put into the carriage to take care of the unfortunate lunatic, and Lily's property was collected and carried by willing hands to another compartment. In less than five minutes the train was off again, and Lily and the young man in grey, sitting facing one another, were once more rushing through the green open country. But what a difference there was in the girl's feelings! How calm, how relieved, how happy she felt now!

"You must have had an awful moment when you first realized he was mad," said the young man.

"Oh, I felt as though my hair were going grey. Has it gone grey, perhaps?" she asked, anxiously. "For I have heard of such things happening."

"No; it's yellow—the colour of corn in the sun," said the young man, gravely.

"I'm so glad," exclaimed Lily, joyfully, "for I am going to a dance to-night, and it would have been horrid to have looked in the glass and found I had grey hair."

"I, too, to-night, am going to a dance," said the young man, "and I was to have escorted some ladies down from town who were going to it too; but as they did not turn up at the station I was going to wait for the next train, which starts twenty minutes later, as I supposed they had missed the express, when your message reached me."

"What made you see at once that it was serious? I was so afraid it might be thought just a joke."

"Oh, I had noticed you on the station long before, and I knew you were not the sort of girl to play that kind of joke," said the young man, gravely, and Lily blushed with a certain pleasure at his words.

"Poor auntie will be so dreadfully upset when she hears of my adventures. She was to have come with me, but I left her in bed this morning with neuralgia. She hated my having to travel alone; although, of course, we never could have imagined anything so dreadful as this."

"Have you friends to meet you at Ipswich?" asked the young man.

"Oh, yes, the Parkers will meet me. Maggie Parker is my greatest friend. And it is at their house that the dance is to be to-night."

"So you know the Parkers? That's splendid! For I, too, know them very well. And I, too, am going down expressly for that dance. It's jolly to think I shall see you again."

The delightful and amazing turn things were taking gave a new lustre to Lily's blue eyes and began to bring back some colour to her pale face. And while she sat in a kind of joy dream, glancing every now and then shyly at the handsome, open, sunburnt face of the young man in grey, Ipswich was reached and her attention was turned to a group of young people on the platform awaiting the arrival of the train.

"Oh, there are the Parkers!" cried Lily. "How nice! There are Maggie, and Ethel, and Joe."

And "Lily, dearest!" cried a girl, running forward, as she and the young man in grey got out of the train, "there you are! And where is Mrs. Walters? Neuralgia? Oh, I'm so sorry! And mother *will* be disappointed. But Frank has managed, I see, to find you out after all. Very clever of him, since we told him to look out for two ladies, one of whom would have white curls. How did you manage, Frank, to recognise Lily Freeston all by herself?"

Lily stared in helpless bewilderment, for the young man in grey was kissing the Parker girls all round in the most brotherly fashion.

"But don't you know it's Frank?" cried Maggie Parker, astonished in her turn. "You must have often heard us speak of Frank, our sailor brother, and he has run up from Portsmouth on purpose to come to our dance. Do you mean to say you have travelled all the way from London together and still require to be introduced?"

"Oh, we have a great deal to tell you," said Lieutenant Parker, "but I suggest that we don't tell it here or now. Miss Freeston is looking pale and tired. Let us take her home and restore her with some tea. After tea you shall hear the whole exciting story."

Lily was very grateful for the suggestion. For now that the danger was over and the reaction had set in, she was really feeling strangely tired and weak. And yet in her heart the sun was shining too, for she knew that for herself another and an exquisite story had begun.

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Dutch Humorous Artists.

By Arthur Lord.

[Attention is drawn to the fact that the present series of articles on the Humorous Artists of the World have already dealt with English artists in January, 1902; with those of Germany in April, 1901; with those of France in December, 1901; with those of America in March, April, and May, 1902; and with those of Australasia in June, 1902.]

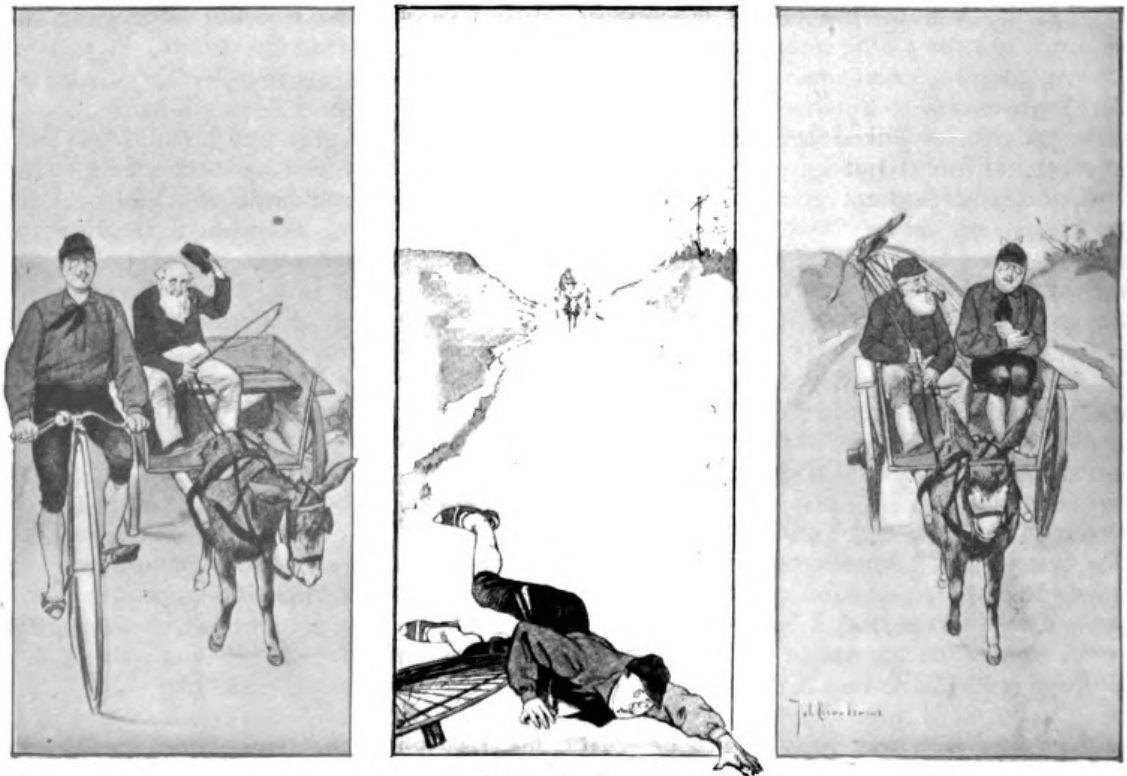
LET us say at once that an artist receives little practical encouragement in Holland. He gets so little money for his work, and so little work for his money, that there is but small stimulus for him to devote his whole energy to art. It is true, moreover, that black-and-white artists who are capable of doing comic work of first-class quality find a like lack of encouragement for their efforts; and if the humorous artists are few and far between in the Netherlands, and the comic papers fewer, it is because there is little money in circulation in Holland and but a small public to buy.



MR. JOHAN BRAAKENSIEK.
From a Photo. by C. Vermeulen.

Under these somewhat depressing conditions there is yet a small band of labourers in the vineyard, and if, in opposition to these conditions, they have succeeded in turning out many humorous drawings which render the few existing comic papers attractive to their countrymen, it is an artistic history of which they may well be proud. The artist, and especially the humorous draughtsman, cannot be said to accept these conditions without a murmur, but it is a low murmur at the best. Their experience of it, and the experience of their fathers before them, has become proverbial, and at the present time the successful artist is the man who does something else.

Art and literature go hand in hand, and the following words from a little book called "Dutch Life in Town and Country," recently published by George Newnes, Ltd., may be



Slow, But Sure.
Drawn by Johan Braakensiek.

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MR. JAN LINSE.
From a Photo. by Poppinghausen, Rotterdam.

as truthfully applied to the existing artistic conditions in Holland as they are correct in describing the literary conditions. "It is a great drawback to literary effort in Holland," says the writer, "that the honoraria paid to authors are so low that most writers who happen not to be pecuniarily independent —and they are the majority—are unable to make a tolerable subsistence at home by the pen alone and are obliged to contribute to foreign publications, and some even resort to teaching." Unlike the literary man, however, the artist is handicapped by his inability to contribute to foreign humorous publications. Lacking the intimate knowledge of the ways of foreign peoples—which, after all, is the mainspring of humorous art—he is forced to contribute to the publications at home and to accept the prices which they are compelled by their own straitened circumstances to pay.

There are not more than a dozen papers in Holland devoted entirely or in part to humour and satire, and of these the principal ones are the *Amsterdammer Weekblad voor Nederland*, the *Humoristisch Album*, *Uilenspiegel*, and *De Ware Jacob*. These four represent the different forms of humour which the Dutchmen like. The first-named, popularly called the *Weekblad* or "De Groene" (from its green cover), is a well-known weekly, which has passed through a respectable existence of twenty-five years, and has attained in that time a position of considerable power. Its humour consists of a special cartoon each week by the celebrated Johan Braakensiek, mainly on political subjects like the South African War, and a page of foreign political cartoons either from the pen of Braakensiek or from foreign papers. The *Weekblad's* large cartoon, through the exceptional ability of its famous draughtsman, exercises no small influence on political thought in Holland, and the cartoon, lifted bodily from the paper, may often be seen placarded throughout Amsterdam in shops and restaurants, where all who care to see may see. But Braakensiek, as is shown by the drawing which we are privileged to reproduce from *Van Alles Wat*, a Braakensiek album published by Messrs. Holkema and Warendorf, of Amsterdam, is something more than a cartoonist. He is an exceptionally clever and humorous book illustrator, and is without question the foremost draughtsman in Holland.

The *Humoristisch Album* is a hearty old weekly of fifty years, devoted to the quieter forms of humour, and more nearly approaches our English comic papers in appearance and contents. *Uilenspiegel* is a satirical weekly, published in Rotterdam, which has been running for about five-and-thirty years. It is a little four-page sheet, mainly devoted to political cartoons, probably to differentiate it from the *Humoristisch Album*, published by



TOO MUCH FOR HIM.—Guide: "This is the famous place of the twenty-four echoes, and last year a gentleman who heard them suddenly went mad."
Lady Tourist: "How did that happen?"
Guide: "His mother-in-law called out to him, and when he heard twenty-four mothers-in-law at the same time it was too much for him."
DRAWN BY JAN LINSE FOR THE "HUMORISTISCH ALBUM."

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the same concern in Rotterdam. Its title may roughly be translated "Fun-Maker" or "Wag." *De Ware Jacob* is the baby in this family of fun purveyors. Recently established in Rotterdam, under the editorship of Mr. E. Gans, and published by the Nederlandsche Kioskken-Maatschappij, it has in its short career of about forty numbers rapidly taken a popular position, and contains the most modern and, in many respects, the most interesting humorous draughtsmanship of the day. In its prospectus it seriously expressed the determination to seek truth and to serve truth with good taste and some humour, to show respect for honest conviction, to combat anything which is untrue and ignoble, and, before everything, to be Dutch. "And in our country there is undoubted need of it," slyly remarked one of its contemporaries.



WELL BROUGHT UP.—"Isn't that medicine nice, Dorothy?" "Oh, yes, Mamma, but don't you think we ought to keep it for Papa?"
DRAWN BY JAN LINSE FOR THE "HUMORISTISCH ALBUM."

One of the oldest, most experienced, and most popular of Dutch humorous artists is Mr. Jan Linse, whose work has appeared principally, for many years, in the *Humoristisch Album*. He has lived for some time in Rotterdam, but he is now situated at The Hague, where he has a pretty home in the suburbs. We found Mr. Linse in a room filled with innumerable sketches, canvases, and half-completed pictures, and he willingly gave us some particulars of his interesting life. He has since sent us a little letter which lets in additional light upon the career of this favourite artist—a letter illustrated at the top by a group of three men in black, the man in the distance being by no great stretch of the imagination conceivably a truthful presentment of Linse himself. The conjecture is borne out by the amusing dialogue which the artist has written beneath his little sketch:—



"What curious chap is that who is always going about with a cap on his head when every respectable man wears a hat?"

"Why, don't you know him? That's Linse—Jan Linse, the *Humoristisch Album* man, the chap who used to draw for *Abraham Prikkie*, the *Spectator*, and for other humorous papers, and the illustrator of lots of books."

"Well, now, is that Linse? How old do you think he is?"

"Sixty, perhaps; but you wouldn't think it. He generally goes about with younger men, and it makes him feel young too. I can't understand how it is you don't know him, for he spends half of his life in the streets. It's his business. So far as I know he has had no University education, and ever since he was a child has been impressed by the satire and humour which are everywhere present in life. These impressions he began slowly to represent by means of pictures, and to see something funny gives him greater enjoyment than a dinner at the best restaurant in town. He *is* a funny chap. If he gives up drawing comic pictures for a while, either because he wants a change or because the Dutch editors pay so badly, you may find him doing business as an agent for wines, or sometimes as a commissionaire, showing strangers the sights of the town. He is a genuine Dutchman, and his chief drink is a glass of 'schiedam,' which he pretends

"Wat is dat voor 'n rare vent, die altijd met een pet op zijn hoofd loopt, als de katholieke menschen een hoed draagt?

PORTION OF A LETTER WRITTEN BY MR. JAN LINSE TO THE EDITOR.
MR. JAN LINSE'S DESCRIPTION OF HIMSELF (SEE TEXT).

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THE THEATRE HAT.—Mamma: "Jennie, your hat is in the way of the gentleman behind you. You might easily take it off."
Jennie: "But, mamma, if I put it in my lap I can't see myself."
DRAWN BY JAN LINSE FOR THE "HUMORISTISCH ALBUM."

he needs for inspiration. Anyway, if you want to have a laugh, just make his acquaintance."

From this clever little bit of fooling we might infer that all artists who draw comic pictures are not serious-minded, but Mr. Linse has his serious as well as his comic side. The demand for his work is never-ending, and in the few moments of leisure granted to him he uses the brush on more ambitious subjects than those appearing in the Rotterdam weeklies. By the younger men he is looked upon, perhaps, as one of the old school, but in these days of political caricature, with which the Dutch humorous papers are filled, it is pleasurable to find one man who can turn out a good comic picture and a good joke. In the majority of cases Mr. Linse supplies both joke and drawing, but often furnishes sketches to illustrate jokes sent to him by the editor, and occasionally redraws a funny sketch sent in by a less practised hand. This latter method, by the way, appears to be a common thing in Holland, for many of the drawings published appear without signature, and it is but kindness to attribute the absence of these signatures to the fact that artists usually refuse to take the credit for redrawing sketches by others. John Leech, it will be remembered, used sometimes to touch up the sketches of good jokes contributed by outsiders, but, in accordance with the custom of *Punch* artists, he never, according to Mr. Spielmann, signed the drawings so made.

To readers of *Uilenspiegel* the signature of "Orion" has long been familiar. In fact, it occurs so constantly that an outsider might be led to believe that "Orion" was the only artist engaged on the paper. However, there are others who appear in its pages frequently enough to give variety to the humour of that famous sheet. As for "Orion," he is a host in himself, and that he never seems to weary by sameness of subject is the best tribute to his versatility and power.

The name "Orion" is another name for Mr. Patrick Kroon, who, a native of Gelderland, obtained his first experience as an



A FATHER'S WOES.—"I notice that when you are at home you always have little wads in your ears, but never when you are out. Doesn't that seem the wrong way about?"
"Not at all, my dear sir. At home I have six musical daughters."
DRAWN BY JAN LINSE FOR THE "HUMORISTISCH ALBUM."

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artist by means of private lessons. He studied at the High School in Zutphen, passed from there in 1880, and went to Amsterdam for further lessons in draughtsmanship. He took a diploma as a teacher, and worked both at the figure and landscape, but, like many another clever man, in a country where art is not appreciated at its highest market value until the poor artist is dead, Mr. Kroon found the struggle for life so great that he had to do anything that came to his hand. "In Holland," he says — and in this he bears testimony to a fact more particularly touched upon in a previous paragraph—"it is not yet possible for an artist to live entirely by his brush and pen." He did his first picture for *Uilenspiegel* in 1894, and also worked for the *Humoristisch Album*, his drawings for the first-named paper bringing him popularity and orders for more work. Mr. Kroon has contributed to other papers, but the three drawings per week which usually appear in *Uilenspiegel* take up the main portion of his time. He prefers to draw people and political caricatures, and his skill in handling heavy blacks —a characteristic of his present work—is acknowledged by his brother craftsmen, the best judges of artistic strength.



MR. PATRICK KROON.
From a Photo. by J. C. Reesinck, Zutphen.

The signature of "Chris Kras Kzn," which has become widely known to Hollanders through the success of *De Ware Jacob*, is a *nom de guerre* adopted by a young journalist of Amsterdam who has gone into illustration merely for his own amusement. "Chris Kras" was born in Amsterdam in May, 1874, and after living at The Hague and at Haarlem settled down in Amsterdam. He was brought up to a commercial life, but after taking the course of the Amsterdam Commercial School and spending a few years in business he adopted journalism as his profession, and is now a valued member of the editorial staff of one of the largest daily papers in Holland.

A man in the throes of daily journalism has little time for other work, but, granted a fertile imagination and a facile pen, the journalist who possesses them has an advantage over slower and less imaginative brethren. "Chris Kras" possesses both, and the frequency with which his cartoons appear in *De Ware Jacob* shows that the pencil—his first love, as he says himself—is often in his hand. He has published several books of cartoons on the South African War during the progress of that conflict, and a new volume of his, called "English Coronation Idylls," has just appeared in Amsterdam dealing with the more humorous phases of the memorable ceremonial with which the new century has been ushered in. Some of these drawings are exceptionally clever, and in nearly every case good-humoured.



"'AVE A RIDE, SIR?"
DRAWN BY PATRICK KROON.

Among other work done by this versatile artist may be mentioned various book illustrations, book covers, posters, and caricatures. It is with some difficulty that we have been able, from the abundance of material, to

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make a selection from the work of "Chris Kras," showing his comic genius. Nearly all his drawings have a political tendency, and would therefore be unfamiliar in subject to our public. Once in a while we get from him a sporting picture which is not only funny, but shows how keen is this artist in depicting all kinds of outdoor pleasure. He is an amateur athlete of considerable standing, and in 1892 won the first prize in the Holland-Catford Cycling Competition on the Paddington track in London.

If "Chris Kras" finds his avocation in art and his vocation in journalism, Mr. J. H. Speenhoff, whose vocation is that of an artist, spends his odd time in writing plays. Several pieces written by him and produced at one of the Rotterdam theatres have been well received by the Holland public, and have marked him as one of the rising dramatists of the day; but it is as a humorous artist that Speenhoff has attained his widest recognition. His experience has been more or less cosmopolitan, for he has worked in Rotterdam, Antwerp, and Glasgow, and has varied the monotony of a successful artist's life by a three years' experience at sea. He



"CHRIS KRAS KZN."
From a Photo. by Koene & Büttinghausen.



A CARNIVAL PROCESSION.
DRAWN BY "CHRIS KRAS KZN" FOR "DE WARE JACOB."

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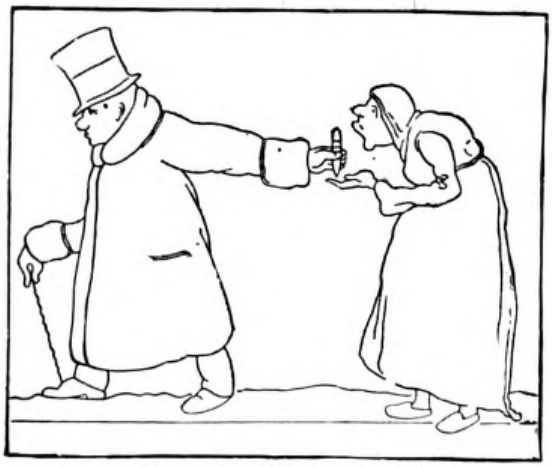
studied drawing at the Academy in Rotterdam and at Antwerp, and, in addition to his draughtsmanship in *De Ware Jacob*, has worked on *Woord en Beeld*, the Rotterdam *Dagblad*, and the Rotterdam *Weekblad*. He has illustrated many books, particularly "The War of the Worlds," by Mr. H. G. Wells, and has contributed many articles to Dutch publications which he has illustrated with his own hand. In a recent conversation Mr. Speenhoff remarked: "In many respects I follow Caran d'Ache and Degas in my drawing; but I look upon Mr. E. T. Reed, of *Punch*, as my master. Though our methods in drawing are different, the intellectual stimulus I get from Reed's work is very great."



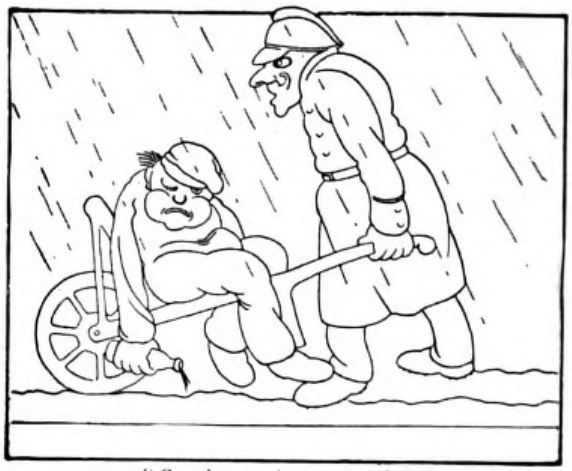
MR. J. H. SPEENHOFF.
From a Photo.

Speenhoff is a quick worker and prefers pen-and-ink. He is apt at versification, and can put a quatrain to a drawing with as pretty a facility as he can illustrate someone else's verse with his own pen—in fact, he is an all-round man, and as good a critic as he is an artist. It is whispered that a well-known gentleman near the Bosphorus was particularly cut up by some sketches done by Speenhoff for a paper called *Daoul*, but that episode recalls one only of many in which Speenhoff has made a hit. The artist himself is an intellectual-looking young man of thirty-two.

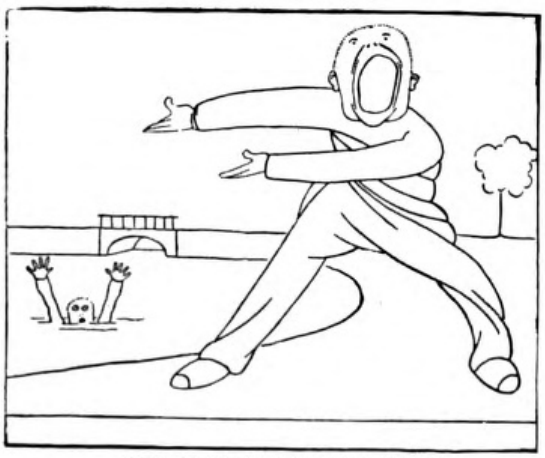
Mr. P. Das, of whose work we give an example, lives at The Hague, and was born near Leyden in 1881. He left the elementary school at the age of twelve and became apprenticed to an ordinary painter and decorator, who for two years encouraged him with painting lessons at The Hague Academy. He later took employment in a pottery manufactory, and left it to assist the



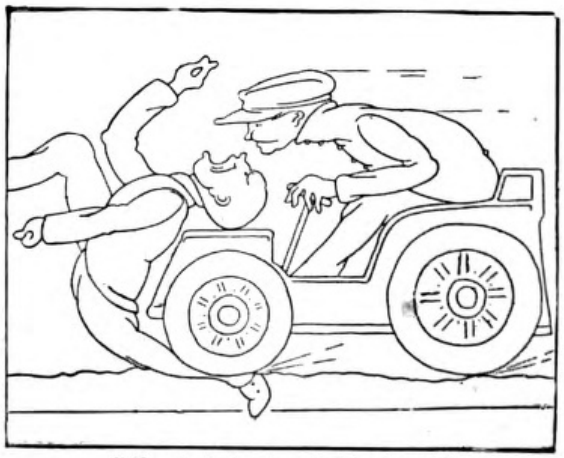
"Do good, and don't look back."



"Cunning need never go afoot."



"The best help is swift and silent."



"He who is deaf can feel the better."

PROVERBS ILLUSTRATED.—DRAWN BY J. H. SPEENHOFF FOR "DE WARE JACOB."

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well-known poster artist, Rünchel. At the age of nineteen he became chief decorator to a leading firm at The Hague, a position which he at present holds. Mr. Das contributes principally to *De Ware Jacob*, and his work is peculiarly humorous in quality, although very infrequent. His is another case of the man with real artistic instincts who, by force of circumstances in Holland, is compelled to sacrifice in mercantile work the talents which might so widely be recognised in the smaller world of art.

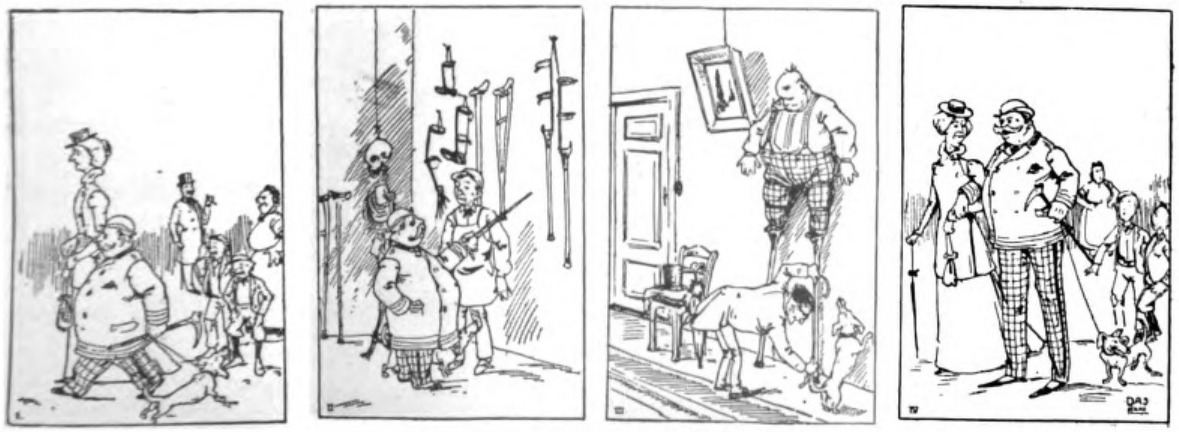
De Ware Jacob possesses on its staff several other clever artists, who, through the kindly encouragement of the paper's enterprising editor, have done much to enhance their own reputation and his. Occasionally is published a sketch of Mr. Willy Sluiter, who was a pupil of the Academy of Fine Arts in Rotterdam and The Hague Academy. Mr. Sluiter is, however, primarily a painter, and in the Paris Fair of 1900 obtained a bronze medal for his picture, "Horses on the Beach." The well-known Kées van Dongen, who has been for some years in Paris contributing to *Le Rire*, *Gil Blas*, *La Caricature*, and other papers, is now in Rotterdam, near which he was born and where he studied; and occasionally has a drawing in *De Ware Jacob*. Mr. van Dongen has worked in Steinlen's studio, and is a friend of that popular artist. Among the lady contributors may be mentioned Miss Nelly Bodenheim, who, however, possesses a greater reputation as a book illustrator than as a comic artist. Her clever books of nursery rhymes, "Handje Plak" and "Het Regent—Het Zegent," show real humour and an excellent faculty in the manipulation of blacks. Miss Bodenheim has been a pupil of Mr. Jan Veth, the celebrated Dutch portrait painter.



MR. P. DAS.
Sketched by himself.

Beside Jan Linse, the *Humoristisch Album* numbers among its contributors Mr. S. Crans, who resides at The Hague, and Mr. J. van Ooyen, who lives at Amsterdam. The latter is, we think, the more finished artist, although the influence of the French is noticeable in his work.

Among other papers in Holland which contain humorous drawings, either original or, by virtue of the beneficent workings of the copyright law, "lifted" from other papers, may be mentioned the *Amsterdamsche Courant*, the *Stuiversblad*, *Reintje de Vos*, *Wereldkroniek*, and *De Kijker*. The *Courant* issues an illustrated Sunday supplement, containing a few comic drawings which appear to have been made in Germany. The *Stuiversblad*, published in Amsterdam at a penny, looks like *Pick-Me-Up*, and is representative of the humour of the world because the humour of the world is in it. For this the scissors is responsible. Little more can be said of *Reintje de Vos*, a sixteen-page penny paper published in Rotterdam, which contains many sketches of German origin. The *Kijker* is a small Amsterdam paper devoted to amusement interests, which contains music-hall drawings interlarded with funnyisms. The *Hollandsche Illustratie* contains an occasional humorous picture, and the *Wereldkroniek* reproduces a few foreign political cartoons.



HOW HE RAISED HIMSELF IN HIS WIFE'S ESTIMATION.
DRAWN BY P. DAS FOR "DE WARE JACOB."

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Some Wonders from the West.

XLIII.—A WONDERFUL MARKSMAN.



From a] THE KEG SHOT, WITH GUN REVERSED. *[Photo.*

MR. C. K. SOBER, of Lewisburg, Pennsylvania, is the most wonderful crack shot in the world. He performs marvellous feats not attempted by professionals, such as shooting accurately with a keg or barrel tied to his gun so as to prevent his "drawing a bead" on the target, *i.e.*, aiming through the sights; firing with the gun reversed over his head; sighting a bird with a hand mirror; and numerous other wonderful performances calling for marvellous skill.

This champion marksman has challenged, and still challenges, any crack shot in America or abroad, professional or amateur, to meet him in a contest. His skill with the gun is almost beyond belief. He shoots with precision from almost every conceivable position and with the gun in every variety of grasp—under him, over him, to right, to left, sitting and standing or lying down; with the gun above his head, between his feet, upside down, thrust through barrels, boxes, and tables—in every position except with the muzzle in his hand. With a rifle in any of these trick positions he can catch a bird on the wing as nicely as any crack shot who takes steady aim and sights in the usual manner.

Mr. Sober follows the sport solely for his own amusement, and it is a difficult task to induce him to give a public exhibition of his skill. Such exhibitions have been given at



From a] SHOOTING BACKWARDS THROUGH KEG BETWEEN THE KNEES. *[Photo.*

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From a] SHOOTING THROUGH SOAP-BOX BALANCED ON ONE FOOT. *[Photo.*

rare intervals to his friends in Lewisburg, however—and marvellous displays of wonderful marksmanship they have proved.

This "gentleman crack shot," as he is termed, because of his decided refusal to turn his skill with the gun to commercial value, has arranged a chronological programme of his fancy shooting, commencing with the least difficult and working up to an exciting climax of wonderful shots.

The initial trick is shooting at birds on the wing with a 25lb. powder keg on his gun-barrels, the gun being upside down and held at about the level of his chin, as shown in our first illustration. Several birds having been brought down in this manner, Mr. Sober makes ready for the second number in his series of keg shots. He swings the gun above his head, and with the fire-arm in this position, still handicapped by the keg-covered barrels, sights his bird, takes aim, and fires, nearly always sending the shot true and bringing down the feathered victim.

A shot acknowledged by all expert sportsmen to be most difficult, and one in which Mr. Sober shows wonderful skill, is the completion of the keg series. Swinging the gun from his shoulder the champion thrusts the keg between his knees, and with the barrel of the gun behind him he bends nearly double to sight his game, and fires with accuracy at a bird in full flight.

With a box measuring 12in. by 12in. on his gun, Mr. Sober seats himself in a chair, and, balancing the boxed rifle on one foot, he fires single-handed.

Next comes his wonderful "table" shot.



From a] THE OVERHEAD TABLE SHOT. *[Photo.*

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The gun is thrust through a table weighing 14lb., raised over his head and held upside down. Mr. Sober is the originator of the trick, and he is the only man known to perform it successfully.

The flour-barrel tricks are also interesting, and call for well-developed muscle, steady nerves, and clever workmanship. There are several of the barrel tricks. The gun in the first one is thrust through the middle of an ordinary flour-barrel. The barrel and gun are then turned upside down, and raised high above the head while the shot is fired.



From a] THE OVERHEAD FLOUR-BARREL SHOT. *[Photo.*

Next Mr. Sober, sitting in a chair, balances the barrel upright on one foot, as shown in the illustration given below. Then the champion lies flat on his back on the ground, and turning barrel and gun upside down shoots over his head behind him at the clay pigeons, birds on the wing, or glass balls. But the last of these feats is the most wonderful, the gun being weighted by no fewer than three encumbering articles—a soap-box, a barrel, and a smaller keg on the top.

From the fact that for the past ten years Mr. Sober has hunted ruffed grouse almost entirely—that bird of all the feathered game in America that flushes and gets into full



From a] SHOOTING THROUGH BARREL BALANCED ON ONE FOOT. *[Photo.*

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From a] SHOOTING BACKWARDS THROUGH BARREL WHILE LYING ON THE BACK. [Photo.

flight most rapidly—he has acquired a marvellous skill in wing-shooting. Recently he made a straight run of thirty-two "downs" on ruffed grouse during a tramp through the forest around his home. Again, he brought down fifty out of fifty-five fired at. He has a record of 537 wild pigeons brought down in three days, and at no time did he kill more than one bird at a shot.

In a contest held near his home not long since, Mr. Sober broke 100 blue rocks out of 101 put up. He has killed ninety-six live pigeons out of 100 aimed at on the wing at twenty-one yards ise, and using one barrel only. At a match of twelve live bats to each man, at which seventeen shooters contested, Mr. Sober won with a score of eleven killed, it being the only match at bats in which he has contested. When he attends trap matches he invariably makes clean scores at glass balls, blue rocks, and live pigeons.

The most remarkable exhibitions of Mr. Sober's skill are, however, in the trick shooting, or, as he terms it, "rough-and-tumble shooting," in which his scores are fully equal to those made by many trap-shooters who fire from the shoulder and not in any way handicapped.

Through long practice of these feats—many of which he originated—Mr. Sober has become so expert that he claims he can perform more unique shots with the double-barrelled shot-gun than any other living man. He performs at least one hundred feats, each shot being more marvellous than the preceding one, all from different positions or under new forms of handicap. Mr. Sober breaks glass balls or blue rocks from either shoulder, with handkerchiefs tied around both barrels of his gun, with the barrels thrust through objects of different sizes, varying from a cigar-box up to a flour-barrel, with his gun either side up, and in many other ways, with wonderful accuracy. He even springs his own trap and then breaks the target.

The first gun he used was an old flint lock owned by an elder brother, and with that the boy killed squirrels and rabbits by the



From a] SHOOTING WITH GUN HANDICAPPED BY SOAP-BOX, LARGE KEG, AND SMALL KEG. [Photo.

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hundred (game was plentiful in Pennsylvania then), and with it he downed quails occasionally—on the wing as well.

The first gun he owned he bought for one dollar and a half, and it was a 28in. 20-gauge single barrel, which, Mr. Sober says, was made from pot-metal; but with it he did great work on quails and pheasants on the wing, and he still has that old gun. Next he had another single 28in. 14-gauge gun made to order, with which he did fine shooting also. His third gun was a double-barrelled 30in. 14-gauge that weighed 8lb., and with it he defeated the best shots in Pennsylvania at the trap in pigeon-shooting.

For shooting game he now uses a cylinder-bore 28in. barrels of either 10 or 12-gauge. His cover-shooting for some ten years has been confined to ruffed grouse, which he claims is the gamest bird in America; and in hunting them he uses pointer dogs which he has himself trained, now having four of them. He has no use for setters in that pursuit, for he says that they are too headstrong and fast and not sufficiently cautious.

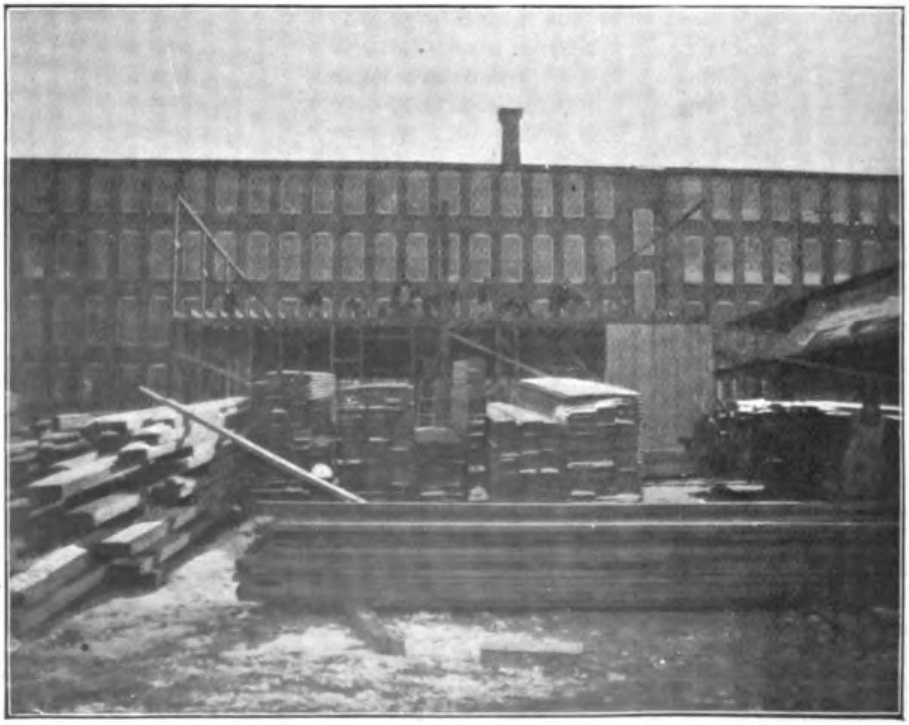
Mr. Sober has spent much of his time in the forest hunting out timber lands and superintending lumber operations, pursuits that have enabled him to follow his favourite course of shooting ruffed grouse almost constantly during the proper season. His record of the number of those birds killed by him during the past few years is astonishing. He has a total for eight years of 814 birds, or an average of over 101 each season.

XLIV.—A HOUSE BUILT IN FOUR AND A HALF HOURS.

THE methods and time occupied in carrying out building operations by ordinary workmen offer a striking contrast with those which have been proved possible in America. The idea of erecting a two-storied building measuring 80ft. in length by 50ft. in width in four and a half hours would cause old-fashioned artisans to stand aghast, yet this unique feat was accomplished a short while ago at Paterson, New Jersey.

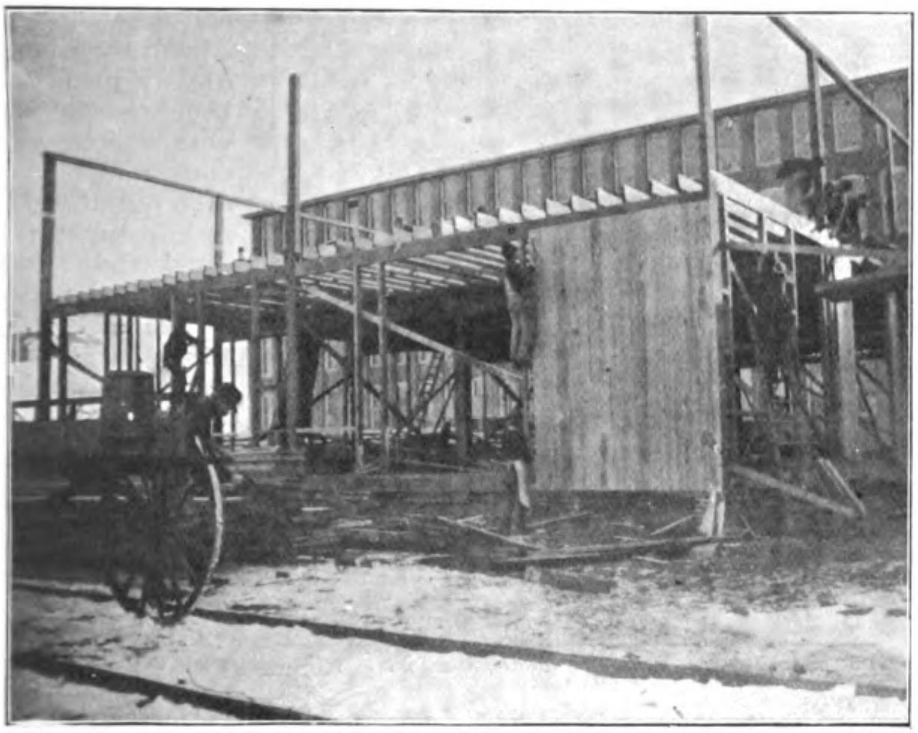
As might be naturally supposed the achievement was the result of a wager. Mr. Peter S. Van Kirk, the head of a large firm of contractors and builders in that town, contemplated erecting a new workshop to accommodate his carpenters. The site of the building was at the corner of Fulton and River Streets, two important thoroughfares. When the designs for the building had been completed and everything was practically ready for commencing the work, the principal met a friend of his, a wealthy brewer, and casually mentioned that he was about to erect a new carpenters' workshop and expected to have it up in a few days. The brewer, evidently discrediting the possibility of workmen hastening to complete a contract, waggishly replied that the building might take as long to erect as the Passaic County Court House, which had occupied five years. To this Mr. Van Kirk retorted that, once he got started upon the work, it would take but a very short while to get it up.

The brewer, however, was still sceptical of



From a] ENGAGED ON FIRST FLOOR—BUILDING MATERIAL IN FOREGROUND. *[Photo.*

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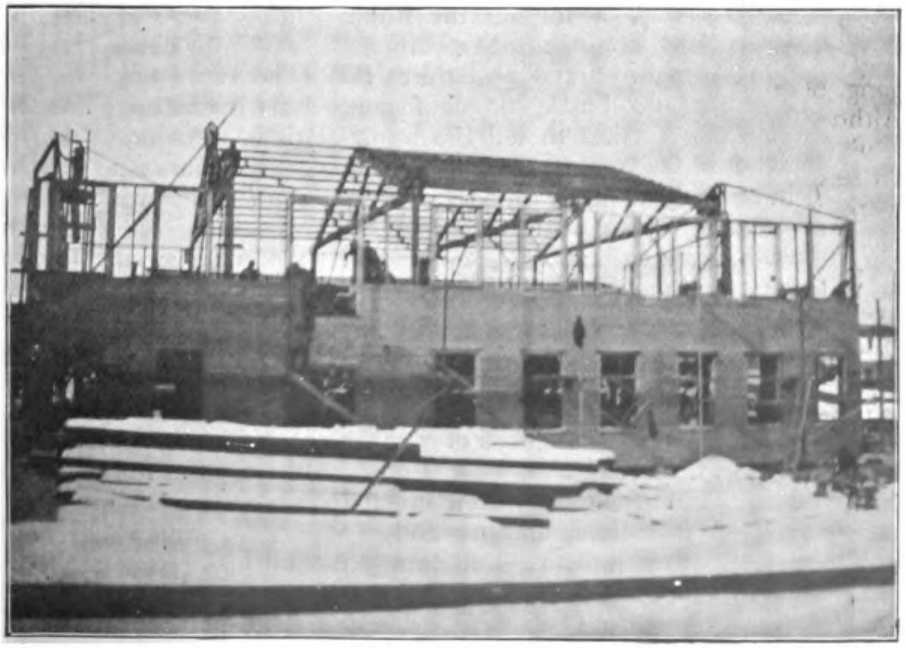


From a] REAR VIEW OF HOUSE SHORTLY AFTER COMMENCEMENT. *[Photo.*

the builder's prowess, and an animated discussion followed. One word led to another, and at last, exasperated by his friend's taunts, Mr. Van Kirk wagered that he would erect the workshop in less than half a working day with his own force of men--that is to say, he would not requisition the services of any men outside of his existing staff for this special occasion. The brewer accepted the challenge. The wager was for £200, and a supper for all the men employed upon the work. The terms of the wager stipulated that the building should measure 80ft. in length by 50ft. in width and be two stories high; the sides would be enclosed and rendered weather-proof, the roof placed in position, and windows and doors fixed -- in short, the shop had to be completed for occupancy.

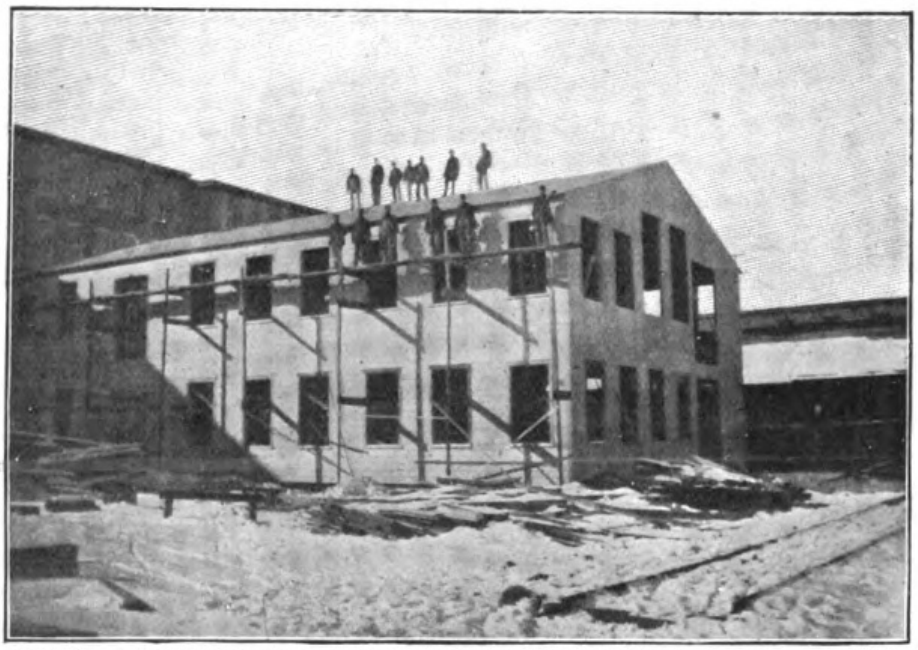
The bargain concluded, the contractor called his employés together and explained the wager. The men entered into the spirit of the contest and preparations were hurried forward for deciding the bet. The men were told just what to do, so that there should be no confusion or progress unduly impeded in any way. The ground upon which the workshop was to be built was cleared and all the necessary material brought upon the spot and prepared for erection. It may be as well to explain that the building was to be a frame structure—that is to say, it was to be built throughout of wood in the characteristic American fashion. Of course, it would have been absolutely out of the question to have raised such a large house in so short a space of time with ordinary bricks and masonry.

When all the materials had been conveyed to the scene of operations and everything was ready for the carrying out of the wager, the



From a] PUTTING ON THE ROOF. *[Photo.*

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From a] THE EXTERIOR OF THE HOUSE COMPLETED IN LESS THAN THREE HOURS. *[Photo.*

two parties to the bet arrived to see that the work was fairly and properly accomplished. The news of the wager had spread over the town, and a large crowd of curiosity-piqued spectators also assembled to witness the spectacle. The weather was most unpropitious for the successful carrying out of the wager. A thick pall of snow covered the ground and a cold, bleak wind was blowing, while the sky was dull and overcast.

At midday Mr. Van Kirk called together and lined up all the men who were to participate in the contest. Punctually as the clock struck one the contractor shouted "Go." In less than a minute the whole gang of men had commenced operations. Although every man worked as hard as he could, there was no bustle or confusion. In less time than it takes to tell the framework was raised and the men were busily engaged in bolting the heavy timbers securely together. There was to be no scamping of the work. Everything was to be completed in just the same manner as if the building had been erected under normal conditions. As soon as the framework of one side had been fitted together other men set to work to attach the boards forming the wall. While this was in progress the framework of another side was being completed.

Directly the framework had been erected as high as the first floor, another body of workmen set to work hoisting into position the rafters to support the floor. The men went at it with a will. They were so bent upon breaking the record that they would not pause for a minute to permit of any photos. being taken. In our illustrations the number of men employed may appear to be insignificant, but this is explained by the fact that they were distributed throughout the building. Each man had been assigned a certain section of work to accomplish, and by this means there was no interference with each other's part of it.

Directly the framework for the sides had been erected the rafters to the roof were swung into their places and the roofing was hurried forward. Simultaneously, therefore, workmen were busily employed in attaching the sides and the roof of the workshop. The windows and doors had to be fixed as the work progressed. The roof was covered with a rainproof substance. In less than three hours the building was finished so far as the exterior was concerned.

The men now entered the building and operations were commenced upon the floors and the fittings of the establishment. The rafters were already in position, so that it was only necessary to lay the floor-boards. The stairs, however, had to be arranged, and this operation alone occupied considerable time. The crowd outside followed the wager with enthusiastic excitement. Now that the men were working in the interior of the workshop out of sight they could only speculate among themselves by what actual time the work would be accomplished, and some lively betting among themselves was the result. They waited patiently for the announcement that the task was achieved and that Mr. Van Kirk had won his bet. Nor had they long to wait. At half-past five there was a rousing cheer from the workmen, which was taken up with equal avidity by the crowd, which testified that the work was finished. It was a record feat. The whole building had been put up and was ready for immediate occupation within the short space of four and a half hours!

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THE PSAMMEAD.

or the GIFTS.

By E. Nesbit.

IV.—WINGS.

"LET'S wish for wings," said Anthea, when they had found the psammead, and were ready to have the day's wish.

"Oh, *do* let's," said Jane; "it would be like a bright dream of deliciousness." So the sand-fairy blew itself out, and next moment each child had a funny feeling, half heaviness and half lightness, on its shoulders. The sand-fairy put its head on one side and turned its snail's eyes from one to the other.

"Not such bad wings," it said, "but don't forget they only last till sunset. If you're flying too high when the sun goes down—well, I'll say no more." The wings were very big and gloriously beautiful, for they were soft and smooth, and every feather lay neatly in its place. And the feathers were of the most lovely mixed changing colours, like the rainbow, or iridescent glass, or the beautiful scum that sometimes floats on water that is not at all nice to drink.

"Oh! but can we fly?" Jane said, standing anxiously, first on one foot and then on the other.

"Look out," said Cyril, "you're treading on my wing."

"Does it hurt?" asked Anthea, with interest, but no one answered, for Robert had spread his wings and jumped up, and now he was slowly rising in the air. He looked very awkward in his knickerbocker suit—his boots, in particular, hung helplessly, and seemed much larger than when he was standing in them. But the others cared but little how he looked, or how they looked, for that matter; for now they all spread out their wings and rose in the air. Of course, you all know what flying feels like, because everyone has dreamed about flying, and it seems so beautifully easy, only you never can remember how you did it; and, as a rule, you have to do it without wings in your dreams, which is more clever and uncommon, but not so easy to remember the rule for. Now, the four children rose flapping from the ground, and you can't think how good the air felt running against their faces. Their wings were tremendously wide when they were spread out, and they had to fly quite a long way apart so as not to get in each other's way. But little things like this are easily learned.

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All the words in the English dictionary and in the Greek lexicon as well are, I find, of no use at all to tell you exactly what it feels like to be flying, so I will not try; but I will say that to look down on the fields and woods instead of along at them is something like looking at a beautiful live map, where, instead of silly colours on paper, you have real moving sunny fields and woods laid out one after the other. As Cyril said, and I can't think where he got hold of such a strange expression, "It does you a fair treat." It was most wonderful, and more like real magic than any wish the children had had yet. They flapped and flew and sailed on their great rainbow wings, between green earth and blue sky, and they flew right over Rochester and then swerved round towards Maidstone, and presently they all began to feel extremely hungry. Curiously enough, this happened when they were flying rather low, and just as they were crossing an orchard where some early plums shone red and ripe.



"THEY FLEW RIGHT OVER ROCHESTER."

They paused on their wings. I cannot explain to you how this is done, but it is something like treading water when you are swimming, and hawks do it extremely well.

"Yes, I dare say," said Cyril, though no one had spoken. "But stealing is stealing even if you've got wings."

"Do you really think so?" said Jane, briskly. "If you've got wings you're a bird, and no one minds birds breaking the Commandments. At least, they may *mind*, but the birds always do it, and no one scolds them or sends them to prison."

It was not so easy to perch on a plum-tree as you might think, because the rainbow wings were so *very* large; but somehow they all managed to do it, and the plums were certainly very sweet and juicy.

Fortunately, it was not till they had all had quite as many plums as were good for them that they saw a stout man, who looked exactly as though he owned the plum-trees, come hurrying through the orchard-gate with a thick stick, and with one accord they disentangled their wings from the plum-laden branches and began to fly.

The man stopped short, with his mouth open. For he had seen the boughs of his trees moving and twitching, and he had said to himself: "Them young varmint—at it again!" And he had come out at once—for the lads of the village had taught him in past seasons that plums want looking after. And when he saw the rainbow wings flutter up out of the plum-tree he felt that he must have gone quite mad, and he did not like the feeling at all. And when Anthea looked down and saw his mouth go slowly open, and stay so, and his face become green and mauve in patches, she called out: "Don't be frightened," and felt hastily in

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her pocket for a threepenny-bit with a hole in it, which she had meant to hang on a ribbon round her neck for luck. She hovered round the unfortunate plum owner, and said: "We have had some of your plums; we thought it wasn't stealing, but now I am not so sure. So here's some money to pay for them."

She swooped down towards the terror-stricken grower of plums and slipped the coin into the pocket of his jacket, and in a few flaps she had re-joined the others.

The farmer sat down on the grass, suddenly and heavily.



"THE FARMER SAT DOWN ON THE GRASS, SUDDENLY."

"Well, I'm blessed!" he said. "This here is what they call delusions, I suppose. But the threepenny"—he pulled it out and bit it—"*that's* real enough. Well, from this day forth I'll be a better man. It's the kind of thing to sober a chap for life, this is. I'm glad it was only wings, though. I'd rather see birds as aren't there and couldn't be, even if they pretend to talk, than some things as I could name."

He got up slowly and heavily and went indoors, and he was so nice to his wife that day that she was quite happy, and said to herself, "Law, whatever have a-come to the man!" and smartened herself up and put a blue ribbon bow at the place where her collar fastened on, and looked so pretty that he was kinder than ever. So perhaps the winged children really did do one good thing that day. If so, it was the only one — for really there is nothing like wings for getting you into trouble. But, if you are in trouble, there is nothing like wings for getting you out of it.

This was the case in the matter of the fierce dog who sprang out at them when they had folded up their wings as small as possible and were going up to a farm door to ask for a crust of bread and cheese, for, in spite of the plums, they were soon just as hungry as ever again.

Now, there is no doubt whatever that if the four had been ordinary wingless children that black and fierce dog would have had a good bite out of the brown-stockinged leg of Robert, who was the nearest. But at its first growl there was a flutter of wings, and the dog was left to strain at his chain and stand on his hind legs as if he were trying to fly too.

They tried several other farms, but at those where there were no dogs the people were far too frightened to do anything but scream; and at last, when it was nearly four o'clock, and their wings were getting miserably stiff and tired, they alighted on a church tower and held a council of war.

"We can't possibly fly all the way home without dinner or tea," said Robert, with desperate decision.

"And nobody will give us any dinner or even lunch, let alone tea," said Cyril.

"Perhaps the clergyman here might," suggested Anthea. "He must know all about angels——"

"Anybody could see we're not that," said

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Jane. "Look at Robert's boots and Squirrel's plaid necktie."

"Well," said Cyril, firmly, "if the country you're in won't sell provisions you take them. In wars, I mean. I'm quite certain you do. And even in other stories no good brother would allow his little sisters to starve in the midst of plenty."

"Plenty?" repeated Robert, hungrily; and the others looked vaguely round the bare leads of the church tower, and murmured, "In the midst of?"



"EVERYONE NOW TURNED OUT HIS POCKETS."

"Yes," said Cyril, impressively. "There is a larder window at the side of the clergyman's house, and I saw things to eat inside—custard pudding, and cold chicken and tongue, and pies, and jam. It's rather a high window, but with wings——"

"How clever of you!" said Jane.

"Not at all," said Cyril, modestly; "any born general—Napoleon or the Duke of Marlborough—would have seen it just the same as I did."

"It seems very wrong," said Anthea.

"Nonsense," said Cyril. "What was it Sir Philip Sydney said when the soldier wouldn't stand him a drink?—'My necessity is greater than his.'"

"We'll club our money, though, and leave it to pay for the things, won't we?" Anthea was persuasive, and very nearly in tears, because it is most trying to feel enormously hungry and unspeakably sinful at one and the same time.

"Some of it," was the cautious reply.

Everyone now turned out his pockets on the lead roof of the tower, where visitors for a couple of hundred years had cut their own and their sweethearts' initials with penknives in the soft lead. There was five and sevenpence halfpenny altogether, and even the upright Anthea admitted that that was too much to pay for four people's dinners. Robert said he thought eighteenpence.

And half a crown was finally agreed to be "handsome."

So Anthea wrote on the back of her last term's report, from which she first tore her own name and that of the school, the following letter:—

"Dear Reverend Clergyman,—We are very hungry indeed because of having to fly all day, and we think it is not stealing when you are starving to death. We are afraid to ask you for fear you should say 'no,' because, of course, you know about angels, but you would not think we were angels. We will only take the necessities of life and no pudding or pie, to show you it is not greediness but true starvation that forces us to make your larder stand and deliver. But we are not highwaymen by trade."

"Cut it short," said the others with one accord. And Anthea hastily added:—

"Our intentions are quite honourable, if you only knew. And here is half a crown to show we are sincere and grateful. Thank you for your kind hospitality.—From Us Four."

The half-crown was wrapped in this letter, and all the children felt that when the clergyman had read it he would understand every-

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thing as well as anyone could who had not seen the wings.

"Now," said Cyril, "of course, there's some risk; we'd better fly straight down the other side of the tower and then flutter low across the churchyard and in through the shrubbery. There doesn't seem to be anyone about. But you never know. The window looks out into the shrubbery. It is embowered in foliage, like a window in a story. I'll go in and get the things. Robert and Anthea can take them as I hand them out through the window—and Jane can keep watch — her eyes are sharp — and whistle if she sees anyone about. Shut up, Robert; she can whistle quite well enough for that, anyway. It ought not to be a very good whistle—it'll sound more natural and bird-like. Now, then—off we go!"

I cannot pretend that stealing is right. I can only say that on this occasion it did not look like stealing to the hungry four, but appeared in the light of a fair and reasonable business transaction. They had never happened to learn that a tongue—hardly cut into—a chicken and a loaf of bread, and a siphon of soda-water cannot be bought in shops for half a crown. These were the necessaries of life which Cyril handed out of the larder window when, quite unobserved and without hindrance or adventure, he had led the others to that happy spot. He felt that to refrain from jam, apple turnovers, cake, and mixed candied peel was a really heroic act—and I agree with him. He was also proud of not taking the custard pudding, and there I think he was wrong, because if he had taken it there would have been a difficulty about returning the dish. No one, however starving, has a right to steal china pie-dishes with little pink flowers on them. The soda-water siphon was different. They could not do without something to drink, and as the maker's name was on it they felt sure it would be returned to him wherever they might leave it. If they had time they would take it back themselves. The man appeared to live in Rochester, which would not be much out of their way home.

Everything was carried up to the top of the tower and laid down on a sheet of kitchen paper which Cyril had found on the top shelf of the larder. As he unfolded it Anthea said, "I don't think *that's* a necessity of life."

"Yes, it is," said he. "We must put the things down somewhere to cut them up, and I heard father say the other day people got diseases from germans in rain-water. Now, there must be lots of rain-water here—



"THESE WERE THE NECESSARIES OF LIFE WHICH CYRIL HANDED OUT OF THE LARDER WINDOW."

and when it dries up the germans are left—and they'd get into the things and we should all die of scarlet fever."

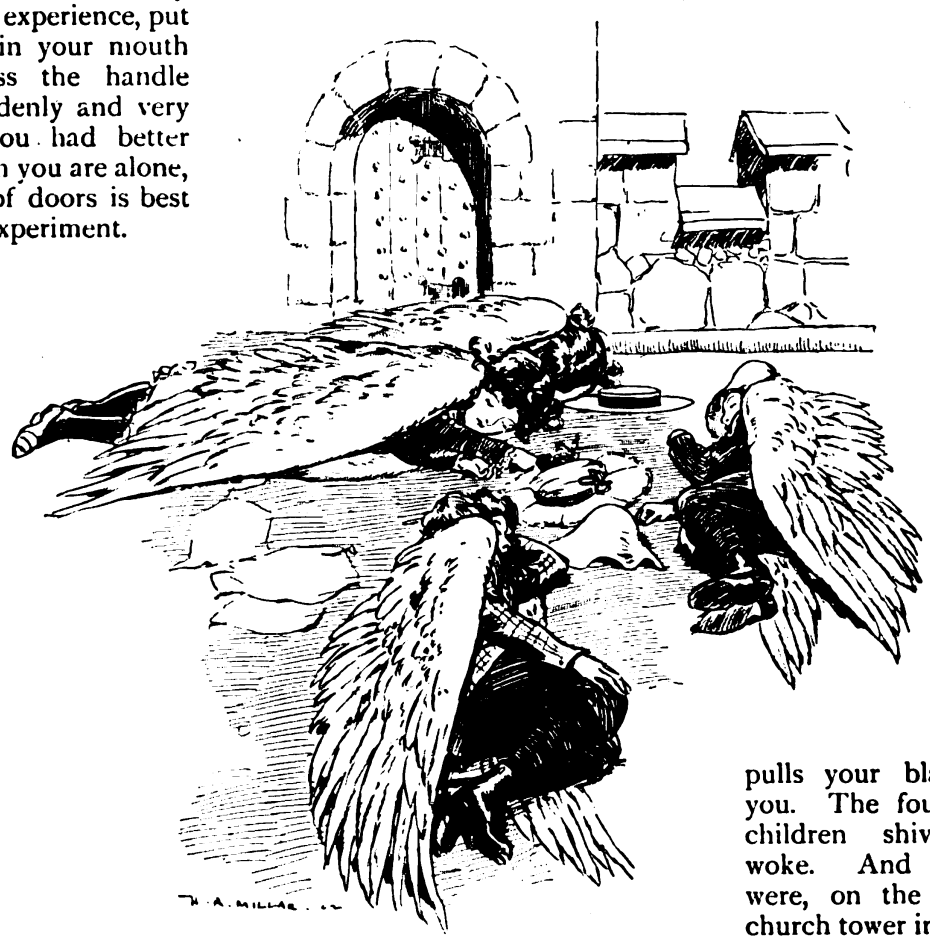
"What are germans?"

"Little waggly things you see with microscopes," said Cyril, with a scientific air. "They give you every illness you can think of. I'm sure the paper was a necessary, just as much as the bread and meat and water. Now, then. Oh, my eyes, I am hungry!"

I do not wish to describe the picnic party on the top of the tower. You can imagine well enough what it is like to carve a chicken

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and a tongue with a knife that has only one blade —and that snapped off short about half-way down. But it was done. Eating with your fingers is greasy and not easy—and paper dishes soon get to look very spotty and horrid. But one thing you can't imagine, and that is how soda-water behaves when you try to drink it straight out of a siphon—especially a quite full one. But if imagination will not help you, experience will, and you can easily try it for yourself, if you can get a grown-up to give you the siphon. If you want to have a really thorough experience, put the tube in your mouth and press the handle very suddenly and very hard. You had better do it when you are alone, and out of doors is best for this experiment.



"THE CHILDREN SLEPT."

When the children had done dinner they grew strangely sleepy, and before it was a quarter of an hour after dinner they had all curled round and tucked themselves up under their large, soft, warm wings and were fast asleep. And the sun was sinking slowly in the west. (I must say it was in the west because it is usual in books to say so, for fear careless people should think it was setting in the east. In point of fact it was not exactly in the west either, but that's near enough.) The sun, I repeat, was sinking slowly in the west, and the children slept warmly and happily on, for wings are cosier than eider-down quilts to sleep under. The shadow of the church tower fell across the churchyard and across the vicarage and across the field beyond, and presently there were no more shadows—and the sun had set and the wings were gone. And still the children slept—but not for long. Twilight is very beautiful, but it is chilly, and you know, however sleepy you are, you wake up soon enough if your brother or sister happens to be up first and pulls your blankets off you. The four wingless children shivered and woke. And there they were, on the top of a church tower in the dusky twilight, with blue stars coming out by ones and twos and tens and twenties over their heads —miles away from home, with three and three half-pence in their pockets, and a doubtful act about the necessities of life to be accounted for if anyone found them with the soda-water siphon.

They looked at each other. Cyril spoke first, picking up the siphon:—

"We'd better get along down and get rid of this beastly thing. It's dark enough to leave it on the clergyman's doorstep, I should think. Come on."

There was a little turret at the corner of

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the tower, and the little turret had a door in it. They had noticed this when they were eating, but had not explored it, as you would have done in their place. Because, of course, when you have wings and can explore the whole sky, doors seem hardly worth exploring.

Now they turned towards it.

"Of course," said Cyril, "this is the way down."

It was. But the door was locked on the inside!

And the world was growing darker and darker. And they were miles from home. And there was the soda-water siphon.

I shall not tell you whether anyone cried, nor, if so, how many cried, nor who cried. You will be better employed in making up your minds what you would have done if you had been in their place.

When they grew calmer Anthea put her handkerchief in her pocket and her arm round Jane and said:—

"It can't be for more than one night. We can signal with our handkerchiefs in the morning. They'll be dry then. And someone will come up and let us out——"

"And find the siphon," said Cyril, gloomily, "and we shall be sent to prison for stealing."

"You said it wasn't stealing; you said you were sure it wasn't."

"I'm not sure *now*," said Cyril, shortly.

"Let's throw the beastly thing slap away among the trees," said Robert, "then no one can do anything to us."

"Oh, yes"—Cyril's laugh was not a light-hearted one—"and hit some chap on the head and be murderers as well as—as the other thing."

There was a pause. Then Cyril said, slowly: "Look here; we must risk that siphon. I'll button it up inside my jacket; perhaps no one will notice it. You others keep well in front of me. There are lights in the clergyman's house. They've not gone to bed yet. We must just yell as loud as ever we can. Now, all scream when I say 'three.' Robert, you do the yell like a railway engine, and I'll do the coo-ee like father's. The girls can do as they please. One, two, three!"

A four-fold yell rent the silent peace of the evening, and a maid at one of the vicarage windows paused with her hand on the blind-cord.

"One, two, three!" Another yell, piercing and complex, startled the owls and starlings to a flutter of feathers in the belfry below. The maid fled from the vicarage windows and ran down the vicarage stairs and into the vicarage kitchen, and fainted as soon as she had explained to the manservant and the cook and the cook's cousin that she had seen a ghost. It was quite untrue, of course, but I suppose the girl's nerves were a little upset by the yelling.

"One, two, three!" The vicar was on his doorstep by this time, and there was no mistaking the yell that greeted him.

"Goodness me," he said to his wife; "my dear, someone's being murdered in the church. Give me my hat and a thick stick and tell Andrew to come after me. I expect it's the lunatic who stole the tongue." And he rushed out, dragging Andrew by the arm.

A volley of yells greeted them. As it died into silence Andrew shouted: "Halloa, you there! Did you call?"

"Yes," shouted four far-away voices.

"They seem to be in the air," said the vicar; "very remarkable."

"Where are you?" shouted Andrew, and Cyril replied in his deepest voice, very slow and loud:—

"Church! Tower! Top!"

"Come down, then," said Andrew. And the voice replied:—

"Can't! Door locked!"

"My goodness!" said the vicar. "Andrew, fetch the stable lantern. Perhaps it would be as well to fetch another man from the village."

So Andrew fetched the lantern and the cook's cousin, and the vicar's wife begged them all to be very careful.

They went across the churchyard—it was quite dark now—and up the tower. And at the top of the tower there was a little door. And the door was bolted on the stair side.

The cook's cousin, who was a gamekeeper, kicked at the door and said:—

"Halloa, you there!"

The children were holding on to each other on the farther side of the door and trembling with anxiousness, and very hoarse with their howls. They could hardly speak, but Cyril managed to reply, huskily:—

"Halloa, you there!"

"How did you get up there?"

It was no use saying "We flew up," so Cyril said:—

"We got up, and then we found the door was locked and we couldn't get down. Let us out, do——"

"How many of you are there?" asked the keeper.

"Only four," said Cyril.

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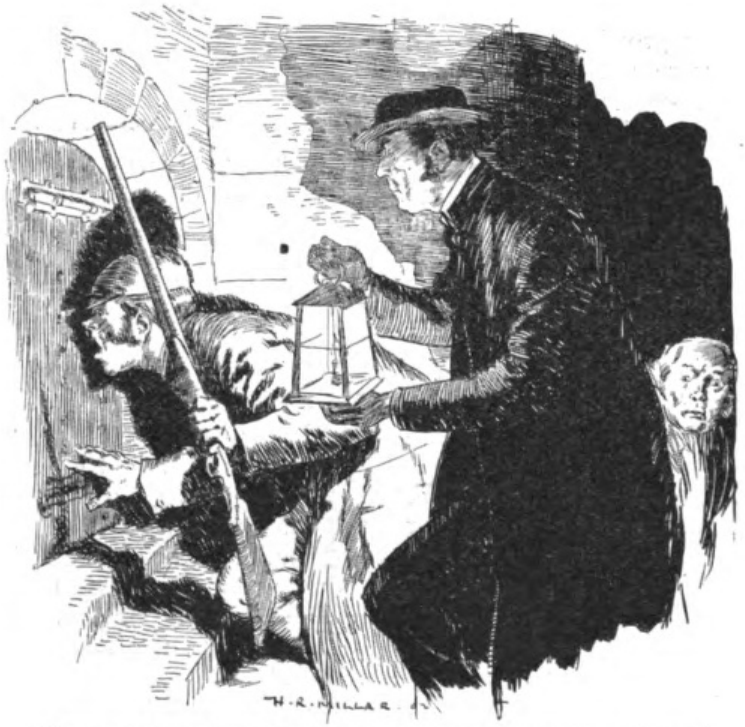
"Are you armed?"

"Are we what?"

"I've got my gun handy—so you'd best not try any tricks," said the keeper. "If we open the door will you promise to come quietly down, and no nonsense?"

When all the bolts were drawn the keeper spoke deep-chested words through the key-hole.

"I don't open," said he, "till you've gone over to the side of the tower. And if one of you comes at me I fire. Now——"



"THE KEEPER SPOKE DEEP-CHESTED WORDS THROUGH THE KEYHOLE."

"We're all over the other side," said the voices.

The keeper felt pleased with himself, and owned himself a bold man when he threw open that door and, stepping out on to the leads, flashed the full light of the stable lantern on to the group of desperadoes standing against the parapet on the other side of the tower.

He lowered his gun and he nearly dropped the lantern.

"So help me," he cried, "if they ain't a pack of kiddies!"

The vicar now advanced.

"How did you come here?" he asked, severely. "Tell me at once."

"Oh, take us down," said Jane, catching at his coat, "and we'll tell you anything you like. You won't believe us; but it doesn't matter. Oh, take us down!"

So they were taken down and all marched into the vicarage study, and the vicar's wife came rushing in.

The vicar had sunk into a chair, overcome by emotion and amazement.

"But how did you come to be locked up in the church tower?" asked the vicar.

"We went up," said Robert, slowly, "and we were tired, and we all went to sleep, and when we woke up we found the door was locked, so we yelled."

"I should think you did," said the vicar's wife, "frightening everybody out of their wits like this! You ought to be ashamed of yourselves."

"We *are*," said Jane, gently.

"But who locked the door?" asked the vicar.

"I don't know at all," said Robert, with perfect truth; "do, please, send us home."

"Well, really," said the vicar, "I suppose we'd better. Andrew, put the horse to, and you can take them home."

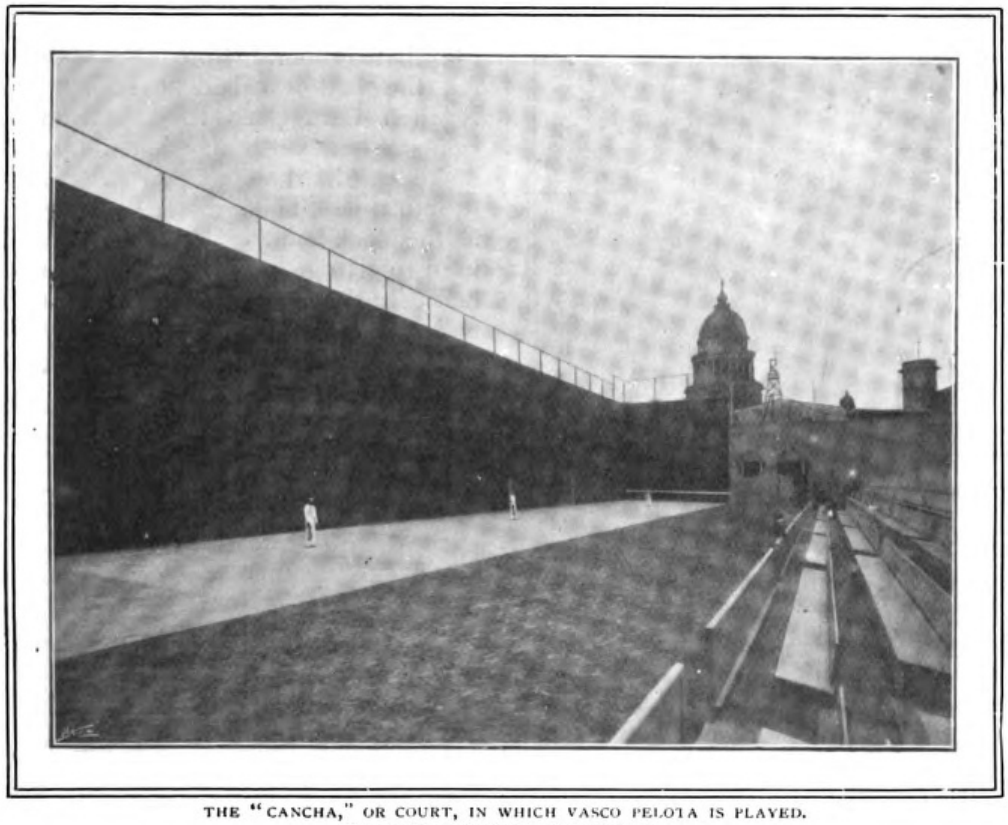
So you see they got off better than they deserved. Only Martha was very angry and swept them to bed in a whirlwind of reproaches. And they were condemned to spend the next day indoors. Only Robert—but that belongs to the Tale of the Castle.

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Vasco Pelota.

By Arthur Inkersley.

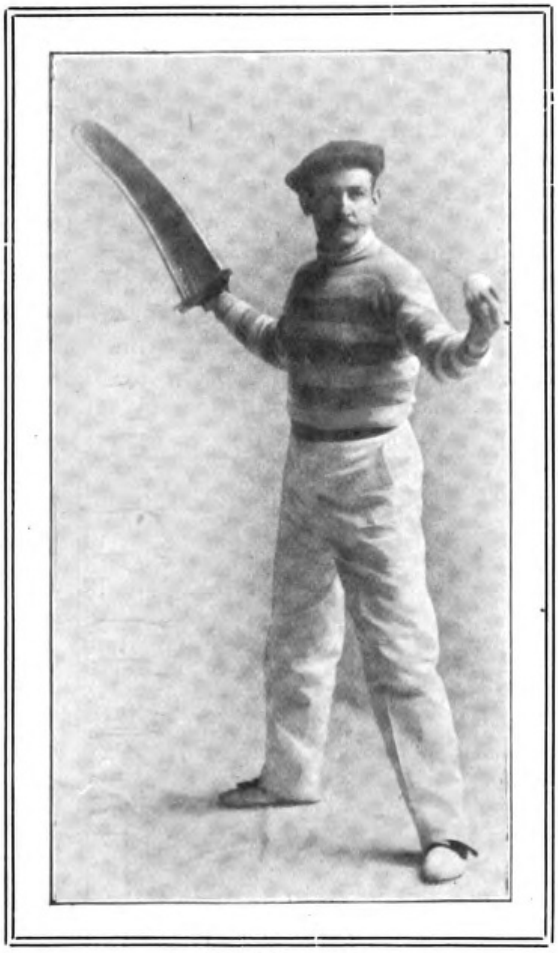
ONE of the fastest and most exciting ball games in the world is Vasco Pelota, or basque ball. It originated in the Basque provinces of Spain, and thence was taken to Brazil and the Argentine Republic, where it achieved so great a popularity that the man who introduced it made a large fortune. From South America it found its way into Mexico, a splendid stone court being built in the city of Mexico at a cost of 200,000 silver dollars, or about £20,000. Though the Mexicans are not particularly addicted to sport, except bull-fighting and cock-fighting, the game excited so much public interest that in eight months after play began the promoters are said to have recouped the cost of the construction of the court and to have gathered in a handsome profit as well. Courts have since been constructed in other Mexican cities.



THE "CANCHA," OR COURT, IN WHICH VASCO PELOTA IS PLAYED.
From a Photo. by Phelps, San Francisco.

From Mexico to California is not a very far cry, and there has recently been completed in San Francisco a "cancha," or court, which, though smaller than some of those in other cities, is still 208ft. long and 35ft. wide. Walls enclose it on the two short sides and one of the long ones, the fourth side being left open. The court is of brick and the floor of concrete. The "frontis," or front wall, against which the play is directed, is 4ft. thick and faced with freestone, it having been found that brick will not stand the constant battering of the ball. The long side wall is 35ft. high, but the front wall and the "rebote," or back wall, are 40ft. in height. Above the walls for several feet is wire netting. The long side wall has upon it white lines 12¼ft. apart, which help the players, from their knowledge of the degree of skill and style of play of their opponents, to calculate where the ball is likely to be placed. The lines also help the spectators to judge of the merits of the various strokes made in a team match or tournament. On the front wall, at a height of 3ft. from the floor, is a strip of metal above which the ball must strike. On the floor of the court, at 48ft. and 84ft. from the frontis, lines are marked within which the service, to be good, must be made. To the right of the court is a strip of ground about half as wide as the court, and in front of the spec-

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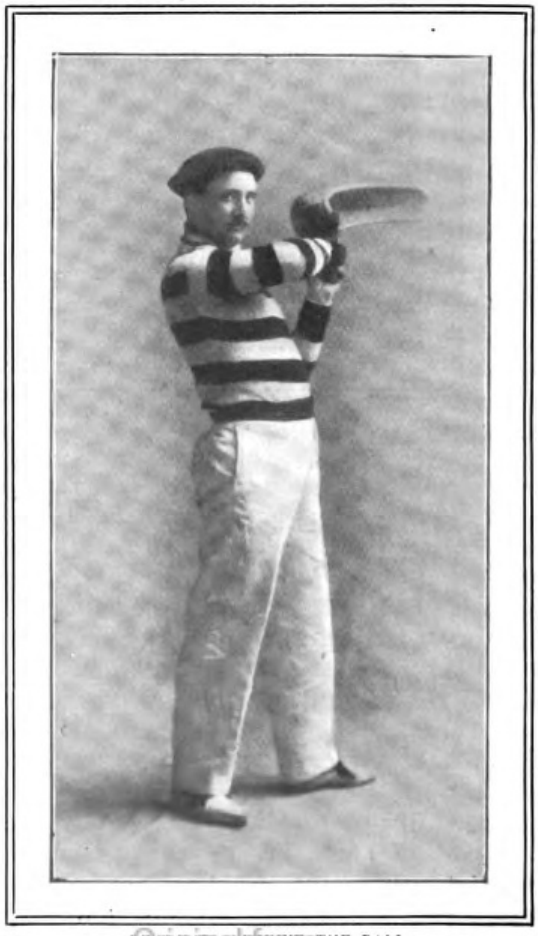


READY TO SERVE.
From a Photo by Haussler, San Francisco.

tators' seats. The players often run out upon this space to return balls which have bounded outwards. Here, too, sit the judges and the ball-keeper. The ball-keeper's duties will be explained later. The judges, on being appealed to by one of the players, decide the point at issue. Their decisions, which must be given promptly and are final, seem not often to be called for; though, when rivalry runs high between teams and the sympathies of the spectators are strong, more dispute probably arises than when exhibition games are being played among a people unfamiliar with the game and the men.

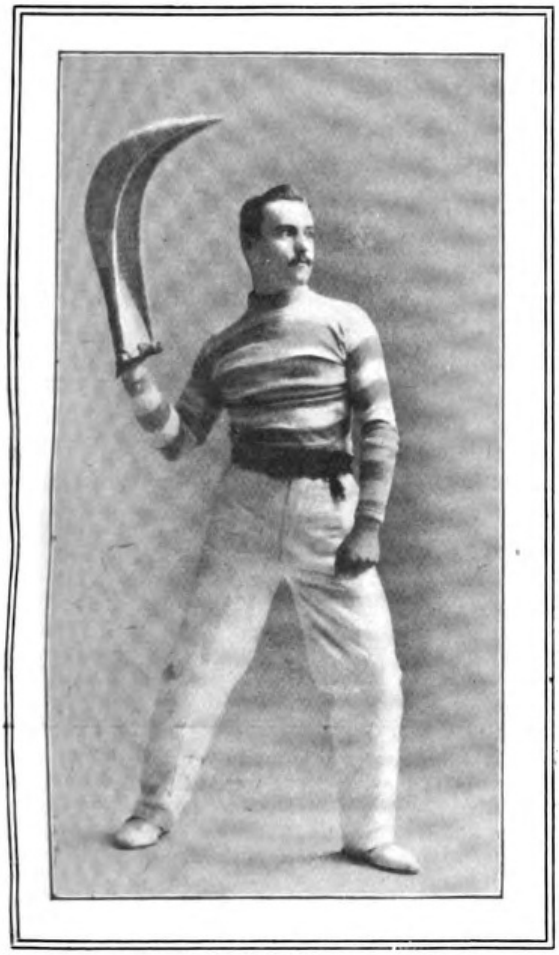
The "pelota," or ball, is made of fine rubber, with strands of thread wound round it, and has a double cover of chamois skin. It is about as large as a base-ball and weighs 5oz. In team play two or three men compose a team. In a team of two the "delantero," or leader, covers the first eight rectangles of the court, the trailer, or "zaguero," covering the last nine. Players must take the balls falling in their own rectangles, but during the progress of a game they may change positions. In a "quiniela," or tournament, six or eight players generally take part, each man playing against the field. Numbers one and two play first; the loser drops out, and three steps in, until all have had their turn. The player who scores the greatest number of innings wins, and the one who scores the next highest number gets "place."

The characteristic feature of the game is the "chistera," a sickle-shaped implement of wicker-work, about 3ft. long and 7in. wide, with which the ball is played. It is fastened to the hand and wrist by a leather glove, and may be worn on either hand, but is almost invariably worn on the right. In it the ball is caught, either on the volley or at the first rebound from the floor. Catching the ball is called "resto." The ball is then hurled, as though from a sling, against the frontis in such a manner as to make it as hard as possible for the opponent to return it. The stroke generally employed is the back-hand one, the free hand being used to give greater force to the throw. The ball is hurled with surprising speed, and the play requires great quickness and agility. The definite allotment of the court to par-



READY TO RECEIVE THE BALL.
From a Photo. by Haussler, San Francisco.

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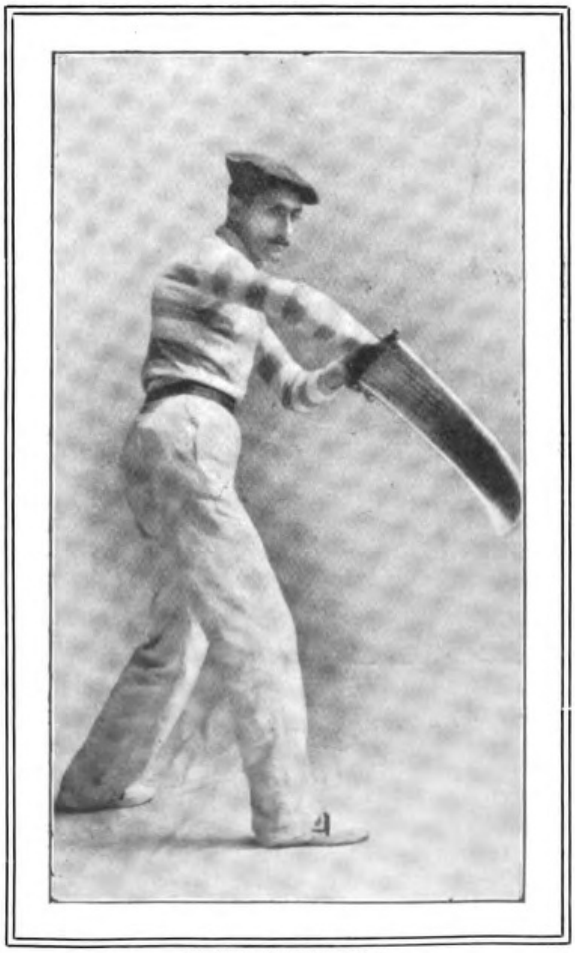
ANOTHER POSITION TO RECEIVE THE BALL.
From a Photo. by Haussler, San Francisco.

ticular players renders confusion between the partners almost impossible. Sometimes a leader may volley a ball which would fall to the trailer if allowed to reach the floor, but usually he leaves the stroke to his partner.

Before beginning an innings the ball-keeper offers a box containing a dozen balls to the player, who selects one. The leader of the team to which the service belongs shows the ball selected to the trailer of the opposite side, and, when the opponents have indicated that they are in position by saying "Lesto," or ready, the leader stands at the 90ft. base line, bounces the ball, catches it in his chistera, and hurls it with sufficient force to rebound from the frontis and strike the floor between the fourth and seventh lines. If the ball is "short" or "long" it is void; two void balls, or faults, give one point to the opposite side. Thirty points constitute a game.

The players wear white duck trousers and rubber-soled shoes, the teams being distinguished by the colour of their caps, sashes, shirts, or sweaters. The company now playing pelota in San Francisco consists of Señor A. Prido, manager; Señor Firmin Alonzo, assistant-manager; and eighteen players, of whom Firmin Yribarren is captain.

From a spectator's point of view Vasco Pelota is a magnificent game. Instead of being shut up in a confined space, as in a racquet or hand-ball court, which quickly becomes unbearably warm and stuffy, the spectators sit in the open air on seats arranged in tiers on the long side of the court. They can see every detail of a game which is exceedingly lively and interesting, the play being very fast and the points easily understood. Unlike base-ball, intercollegiate football, or many other games, pelota can be enjoyed at once by the inexpert, non-technical spectator. The game is exciting much attention in San Francisco, and, if it proves financially successful, will doubtless be introduced into other large cities of the United States, and there is no reason why it should not be brought to England, where there are thousands of athletic lovers of a game like "Sport Vasco," which affords more violent and healthful exercise in a short time than almost any other now in vogue.



RETURNING THE BALL.
From a Photo. by Haussler, San Francisco.

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*Curiosities.**

[*We shall be glad to receive Contributions to this section, and to pay for such as are accepted.*]

A BRIDGE BUILT THROUGH A HOUSE.

"This is a photograph of the Victoria Bridge, Perth, which crosses the River Tay. The northern end has been built through a house. A dispute arose as to the amount of the compensation to be paid for the house; but while litigation was going on the bridge was commenced, built through the house, and opened, and though it has been open about two years the ends of the house still stand and the interior of the rooms can be seen."—Mr. W. Dunscomb Vallance, 23, Brompton Square, S.W.





A GOLFING CURIOSITY.

Mr. Max Pemberton, the talented author of "The House Under the Sea," the last chapters of which appear in this issue, sends a remarkable golfing curiosity. The photograph shows a golf ball driven by A. Wyndham, Esq., straight on to one of the Westward Ho! rushes, which pierced it so that you could hold the ball up by the rush. It is a remarkable thing that a golf ball, which is nearly as hard as wood, should be thus spiked on to the point of a rush which is almost as brittle as glass. The photograph was taken by Herbert Wotton, Esq., the well-known Mid-Surrey golfer.

SCHOOLROOM "STACKING."

"I send you a photograph of my room as it looked one night when I came back from class. Every Freshman must have his room 'stacked' by the sophomores, so my turn came in due course. They climbed over the transom and literally stacked everything in one corner of the room. Every garment had at least one hard knot in it, and some of them had two or three. Over a thousand stamps I had collected, which were loose in a box, were scattered over the whole room. Six packs of playing-cards were also thrown in the 'stack.' My tooth-brush was put in the water-pitcher and coal-oil was poured over it. Nothing but the map on the wall was left in its place. The stackers hung out a sign from the window, 'Stack.' Of course, every student saw the sign and came up to see how the room looked. It was past twelve o'clock that night before I got my bed down so as to sleep on it. The 'stacking' is not done with any malicious intention; only for fun and pastime."—Mr. Gordon Stuart, Agricultural College, Michigan.



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AN EXPLOSION FREAK.

"This photograph apparently represents a coat thrown by its owner upon the branches of a tree. It reached its position, however, in a very peculiar manner, actually being blown over 500ft. by an explosion of nitro-glycerine at Snannopin, Pennsylvania. The coat was hanging in the engine-room of the nitro-glycerine factory, and was thrown into the air, yet, strange to say, not a hole was torn in it. Another strange freak of the explosion was to hurl a piece of box cover and lodge it in the same tree which supports the coat. The explosion occurred in what is known as the mixing-house, which was torn into pieces the size of kindling wood."—Mr. D Allan Willey, Baltimore.

AN INGENIOUS DENTIST.

"This rather odd photograph is that of a cast taken by a dentist of Bordeaux of his own nose and face, and sent to me for the purpose of fitting eyeglasses to his nose.



Rather an ingenious idea and a very good substitute, since the man could not come to Paris himself."—Mr. E. B. Meyrowitz, Optician, 3, Rue Scribe, Paris.

THE MOON IN A TENNIS-BALL.

"This photograph is apparently one of the crescent moon through a telescope; in reality, however, it is a photograph of a lawn-tennis ball fixed against a black piece of cloth in a dark room, the light being caused by burning a piece of magnesium wire, which must be kept in one place. By altering the position of the light a full, half, or crescent moon can be taken. The roughness of a tennis-ball cover is about equivalent to the formation of the surface of the moon, and the inequalities of the flannel present a curiously exact likeness to the appearance of the volcanic ranges as seen through a telescope of moderate magnifying power."—Mr. C. S. Lawrence, Willey Road, Stanstead, Caterham.



WHAT IS THIS?

"The white streak across the bottom half of this photo. is a donkey's ear; the object at the end of it is a camel ladened with dry sticks. I photographed the enclo-ed picture whilst on the back of a donkey, intending to take the back view of a laden camel, but the donkey moved his ear, thus causing this extraordinary photo." — Mr. Malcolm Campbell, Northwood, Chislehurst, Kent.



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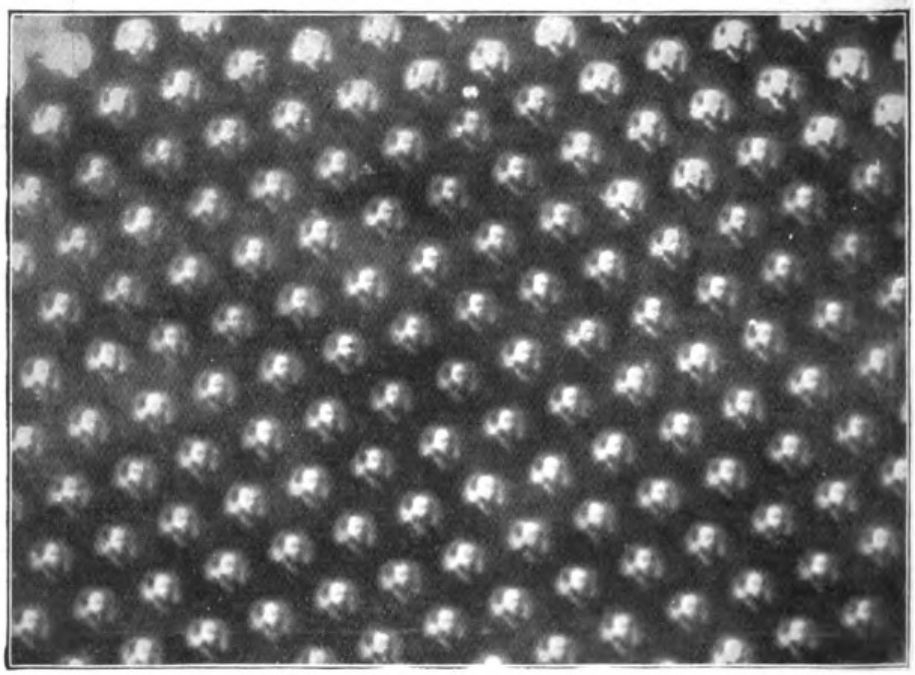


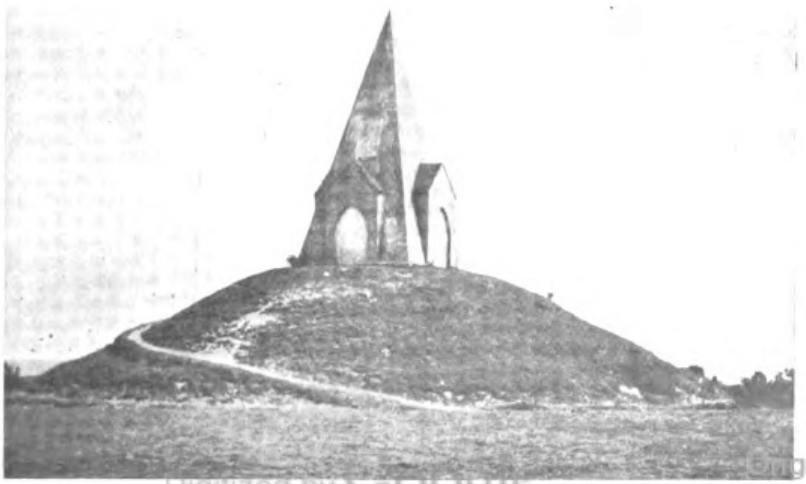
IS THIS THE TINIEST LIVING BABY?

"This photograph is a portrait of little Elmer Clayton, son of Mr. and Mrs. Charles Clayton, of Los Angeles, who is surely one of the tiniest of living babies. He is healthy and lively, and at the age of two weeks weighed an ounce over two pounds, having gained a little over half a pound since birth. The picture shows him cuddled into a small dinner-plate, snugly as you please. The likeness of so dainty a gentleman may be of interest to your 'Curiosities' readers."—Mr. John L. Von Blon, Los Angeles, California.

A MONUMENT TO A HORSE.

"There are many monuments to horses scattered over England, but it is questionable whether any one of them can compete with that at Farley, Hampshire, in usefulness. Standing on the summit of a mound, which in itself is at a high elevation, the Farley Horse Monument has been a conspicuous landmark for many generations. There is a chamber inside the monument, and an inscription on the wall tells all that is known about the structure: 'Underneath lies buried a horse, the property of Paulet St. John, Esq., that in the month of September, 1733, leaped into a chalk-pit 25ft. deep a-foxhunting with his master on his back. And in October, 1734, he won the Hunters' Plate on Worthy Downs, and was rode by his owner and entered in the name of "Beware Chalk Pit."' That this inscription is still to be seen is due to the fact of its renewal in 1870 by the Right Hon. Sir William Heathcote, Baronet."—Mr. H. C. Shelley, Carlton Lodge, Palmerston Road, Bowes Park, N.





THE EYE OF A BEETLE.

"The eyes of insects may be described as hemispheres placed on each side of the head. The reason for this shape will be evident when we consider the difference existing between these and the eyes of the human subject. In man the eyes are adjustable, by their muscles, so as to traverse an angle of vision of some 60deg. to 80deg. The mechanism by which this is effected in man is entirely absent in insects, but is compensated for by a hemispherical arrangement of numerous lenses situated on the convexity of the cornea. This is well shown in the accompanying photo-micrograph of a vertical section of the eye of a dragon-fly. The lenses occupy the centres of hexagonal depressions within the corneæ, and each transmits an image of the surrounding scene, but not in a multiform character, as the images received are carried by the optical rods within the eye and are received as one image by the retina and are united in one conception. This hemispherical arrangement of the lenses allows the insect a wide range of vision, a provision doubtless favourable to vigilance. As a proof of this I enclose the portrait—or should I say portraits?—of a gentleman reflected through the corneal lenses of a beetle."—Mr. T. Charters White, 26, Belgrave Road, S.W.

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A REMARKABLE DOG.

"I send you a photograph of my old brown retriever dog, Shot, who was twenty-two years old last January. He has not missed a shooting season for many, many years, and his nose is absolutely as good as ever it was, if not better. He is very slightly affected in his sight, but absolutely deaf as a post, and works by signs from me only, as I fortunately always taught him to do. He is the cleverest dog imaginable at all sorts of shooting, and in the photo., which I took on his birthday in January last after shooting, you see him surrounded by the duck, snipe, and golden plover, and I may mention that he picked me up thirty-three grouse at one drive two years ago only, so you see he is as active as he looks."—Captain E. P. Brooke, Ravenscraig, Conway, North Wales.



THE HUMAN TELESCOPE.

"This interesting photo. is the invention of Mr. Jack Lynn, the well-known society entertainer and eldest son of the famous Dr. Lynn. The telescope is in two parts, and is fastened by an ordinary leather belt to any person or thing. By getting the front and back parts in line, one is able to see perfectly right through the obstacle and to focus and use the instrument as an ordinary telescope; in fact, objects are seen more distinctly when a block of stone or other opaque substance intervenes. This telescope was awarded the diploma at the Inventions Exhibition, April, 1901."—Mr. A. C. Lambe, 207, High Street, Stoke Newington, N.

CORMORANT'S NEST MADE OUT OF STEEL-WIRE.

"The nest shown in the accompanying photograph is a wonderful curiosity for two reasons: the locality in which it was found and the material of which it was constructed. A party of officers and men from one of the ships on the South African station went to visit the wreck of H.M.S. *Sybille* (which, it will be remembered, was wrecked off Lambert's Bay, on the south-west coast of Africa, about a year ago). One of the officers, who had climbed up into the 'look-out' at the mast-head, found there a cormorant's (*Phalacrocorax nigra*) nest containing five eggs. On closer inspection the nest was seen to be made up of bits of sea-weed firmly bound together and interwoven with cordage and stout steel-wire from the rigging. The nest and eggs are being sent to a London museum."

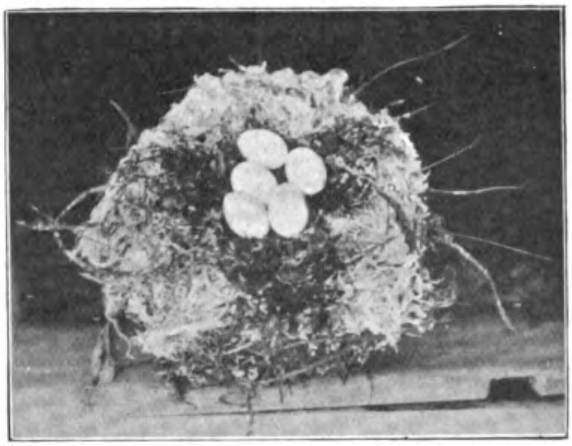


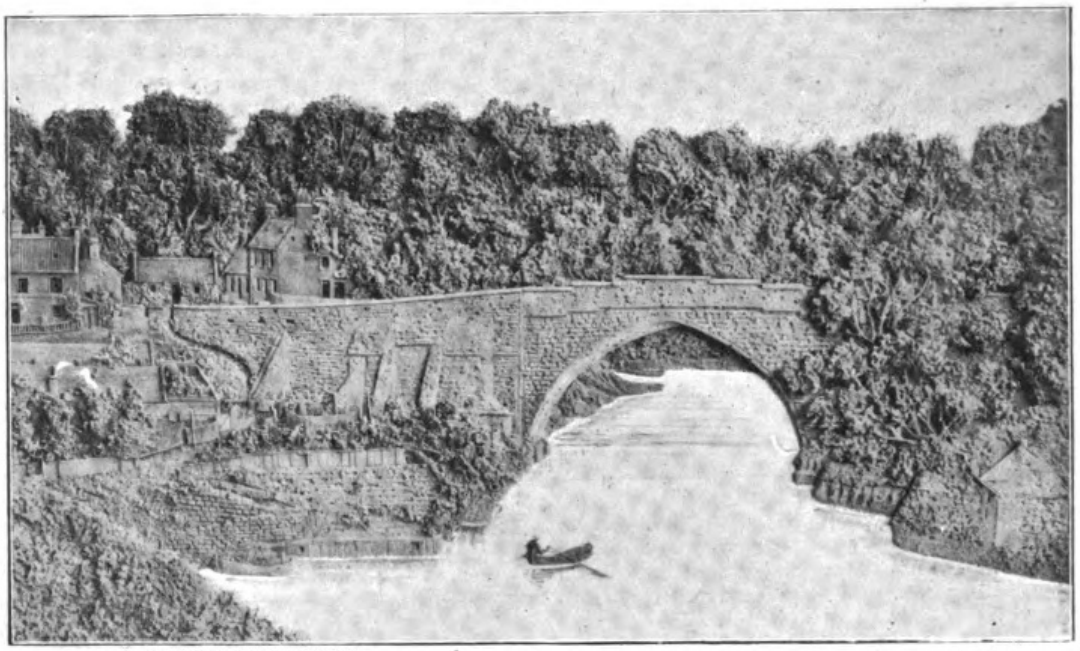
Photo. by Alfred Moysey, Esq., R.N. — Staff-Surgeon C. Marsh Beadnell, H.M.S. *Barracouta*, Simon's Bay, S.A.

THE SURVIVAL OF THE FITTEST.

"Here is a striking example of tropical growth, being a creeper from a West African jungle, which had so entwined itself around a tree that the life was strangled out of the latter. There is now a hollow within the convolute creeper, and no remains of the tree which served as support in the first instance. The huge size of the creeper is also remarkable, as may be judged by comparing it with the chair on which it stands."—Mr. C. S. Sargisson, "Glenthorn," Strensham Hill, Moseley, Birmingham.



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A PICTURE IN CORK.

Cork is, perhaps, the most difficult substance in the world to lend itself to the knife of the sculptor. The above beautiful carving in this material occupied the artist for a period of four weeks, and was designed and executed to the order of Mr. John Smith, cork merchant, of Aberdeen. It is generally conceded to be one of the most beautiful cork pictures in the world, and depicts the Brig of Balgownie, which crosses the River Don, in Aberdeenshire, and which has been immortalized by Byron in the famous lines :—

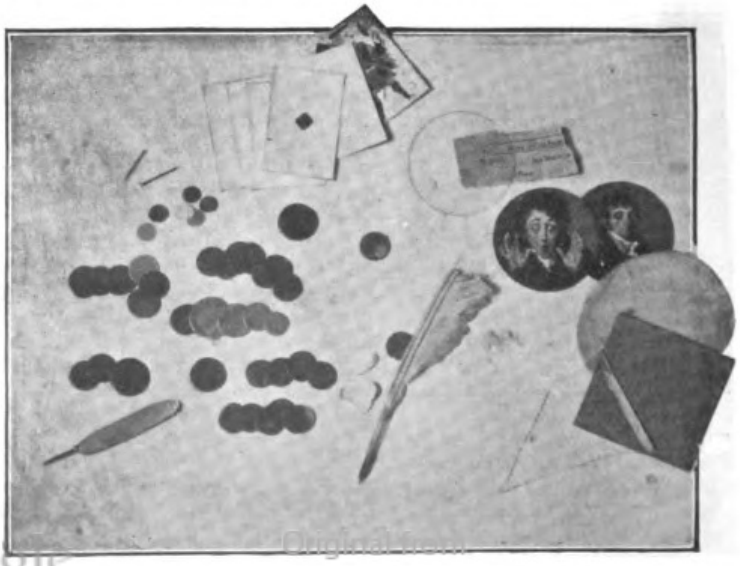
Brig o' Balgownie, black as your wa',
A mare's a foal, a mither's a son,
Doon ye shall fa'.

That prophecy has never been fulfilled, however, for the bridge still stands its ground and remains one of the prettiest places in Aberdeen. The above picture comprises thousands of cork filings.

NAPOLEON'S MAGIC TABLE.

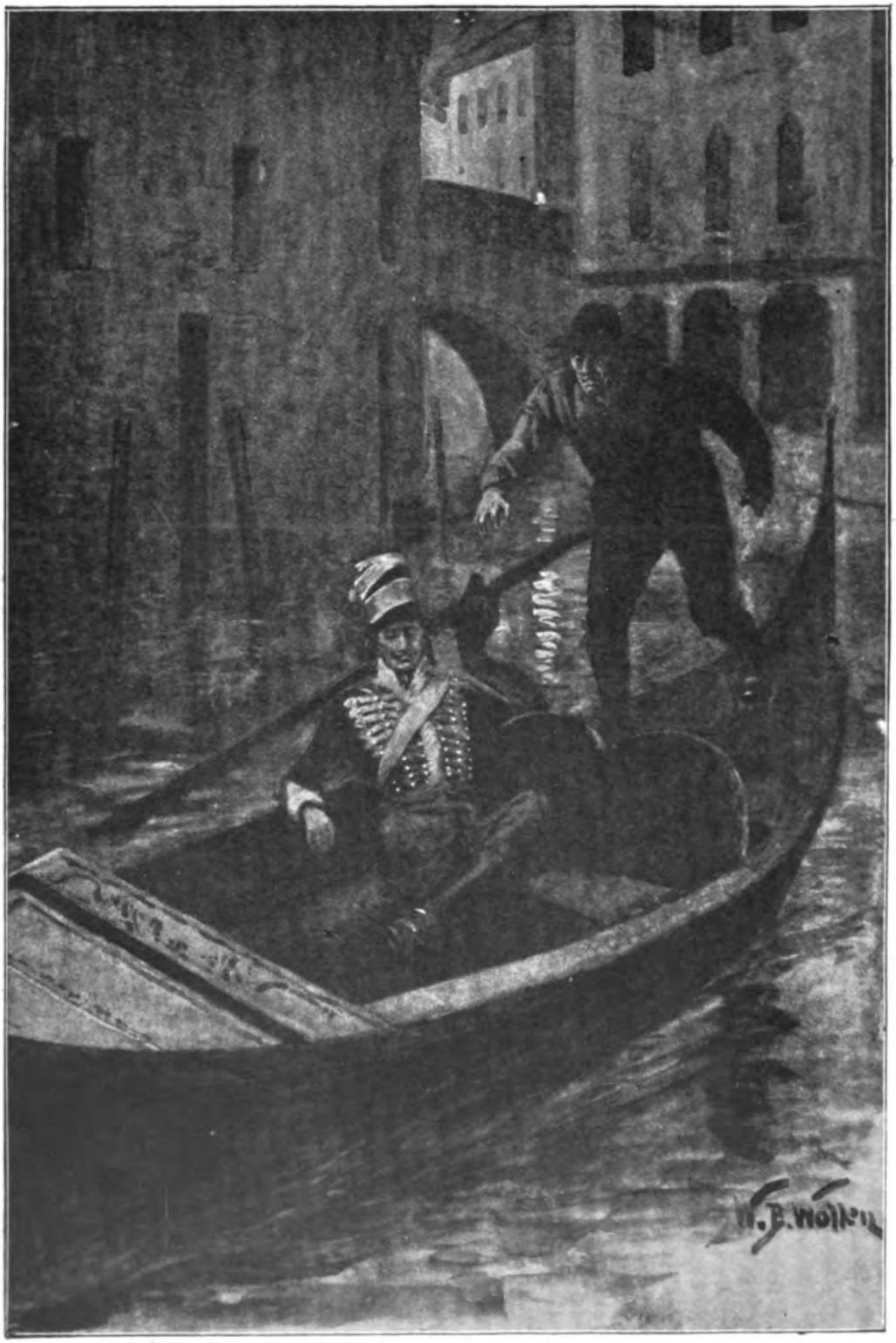
"This table is one of the greatest curiosities from the time of the Grand Emperor, who had it in his study at the Castle of St. Cloud. After the death of Napoleon it was bought in London by Baron Rehausen, Swedish Ambassador to the Court of St. James at that time. It is now owned through inheritance by one of the foremost families of the Swedish nobility. Inside the drawer of the table is pasted an old slip on which is printed a description, which in modernized English reads as follows : 'The Emperor Napoleon was highly delighted with this extraordinary work of art. It formed the surface of one of the tables in his study, and was always shown to all foreigners of distinction who visited the Imperial Court. It is a painting, whose resemblance to what it represents is the most illusive ever produced by the genius of man. One may look at this strange production of art in different lights—the pieces of money, the fragment of broken glass, the pen-knife, water, and cards retain an equally illusive appearance as the observer moves round the table—but it requires a very minute examination to discover all the truly magical wonders it possesses.' In these times, when relics of Napoleon I. are eagerly sought for, the present whereabouts and the picture of this masterpiece should certainly interest all connoisseurs."
—Mr. Alfred Lindgren, care of Aktiebolagst, Nordiska Kreditbanken, Stockholm.





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"THE GONDOLIER FELL UPON ME FROM BEHIND."

(*See page* 125.)

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How Brigadier Gerard Lost His Ear.

By A. Conan Doyle.

IT was the old Brigadier who was talking in the café.

I have seen a great many cities, my friends. I would not dare to tell you how many I have entered as a conqueror with eight hundred of my little fighting devils clanking and jingling behind me. The cavalry were in front of the Grande Armée, and the Hussars of Conflans were in front of the cavalry, and I was in front of the Hussars. But of all the cities which we visited Venice is the most ill-built and ridiculous. I cannot imagine how the people who laid it out thought that the cavalry could manœuvre. It would puzzle Murat or Lassalle to bring a squadron into that square of theirs. For this reason we left Kellermann's heavy brigade and also my own Hussars at Padua on the mainland. But Suchet with the infantry held the town, and he had chosen me as his aide-de-camp for that winter, because he was pleased about the affair of the Italian fencing-master at Milan. The fellow was a good swordsman, and it was fortunate for the credit of French arms that it was I who was opposed to him. Besides, he deserved a lesson, for if one does not like a *prima donna's* singing one can always be silent, but it is intolerable that a public affront should be put upon a pretty woman. So the sympathy was all with me, and after the affair had blown over and the man's widow had been pensioned Suchet chose me as his own galloper, and I followed him to Venice, where I had the strange adventure which I am about to tell you.

You have not been to Venice? No, for it is seldom that the French travel. We were great travellers in those days. From Moscow to Cairo we had travelled everywhere, but we went in larger parties than were convenient to those whom we visited, and we carried our passports in our limbers. It will be a bad day for Europe when the French start travelling again, for they are slow to leave their homes, but when they have done so no one can say how far they will go if they have a guide like our little man to point out the way. But the great days are gone and the great men are dead, and here am I, the last of them, drinking wine of Suresnes and telling old tales in a café.

But it is of Venice that I would speak. The folk there live like water-rats upon a mud-bank, but the houses are very fine, and the churches, especially that of St. Mark, are as great as any I have seen. But above all they are proud of their statues and their pictures, which are the most famous in Europe. There are many soldiers who think that because one's trade is to make war one should never have a thought above fighting and plunder. There was old Bouvet, for example—the one who was killed by the Prussians on the day that I won the Emperor's medal; if you took him away from the camp and the canteen, and spoke to him of books or of art, he would sit and stare at you. But the highest soldier is a man like myself who can understand the things of the mind and the soul. It is true that I was very young when I joined the army, and that the quarter-master was my only teacher, but if you go about the world with your eyes open you cannot help learning a great deal.

Thus I was able to admire the pictures in Venice, and to know the names of the great men, Michael Titiens, and Angelus,

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"HERE AM I, TELLING OLD TALES IN A CAFÉ."

and the others, who had painted them. No one can say that Napoleon did not admire them also, for the very first thing which he did when he captured the town was to send the best of them to Paris. We all took what we could get, and I had two pictures for my share. One of them, called "Nymphs Surprised," I kept for myself, and the other, "Saint Barbara," I sent as a present for my mother.

It must be confessed, however, that some of our men behaved very badly in this matter of the statues and the pictures. The people at Venice were very much attached to them, and as to the four bronze horses which stood over the gate of their great church, they loved them as dearly as if they had been their children. I have always been a judge of a horse, and I had a good look at these ones, but I could not see that there was much to be said for them. They were too coarse-limbed for light cavalry chargers and they had not the weight for the gun-teams. However, they were the only four horses, alive or dead, in the whole town, so it was not to be expected that the people would know any better. They wept bitterly when they were sent away, and ten French soldiers were found floating in the canals that night. As a punishment for these murders a great many more of their pictures were sent away, and the soldiers took to breaking the statues and firing their muskets at the stained-glass windows. This made the people furious, and there was very bad feeling in the town. Many officers and men disappeared during that winter, and even their bodies were never found.

For myself I had plenty to do, and I never found the time heavy on my hands. In every country it has been my custom to try to learn the language. For this reason I always look round for some lady who will be kind enough to teach it to me, and then we practise it together. This is the most interesting way of picking it up, and before I was thirty I could speak nearly every tongue in Europe; but it must be confessed that what you learn is not of much use for the ordinary purposes of life. My business, for example, has usually been with soldiers and peasants, and what advantage is it to be able to say to them that I love only them, and that I will come back when the wars are over?

Never have I had so sweet a teacher as in Venice. Lucia was her first name, and her second—but a gentleman forgets second names. I can say this with all discretion, that she was of one of the senatorial families of Venice and that her grandfather had been Doge of the town. She was of an exquisite beauty—and when I, Etienne Gerard, use such a word as "exquisite," my friends, it has a meaning. I have judgment, I have memories, I have the means of comparison.

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Of all the women who have loved me there are not twenty to whom I could apply such a term as that. But I say again that Lucia was exquisite. Of the dark type I do not recall her equal unless it were Dolores of Toledo. There was a little brunette whom I loved at Santarem when I was soldiering under Massena in Portugal—her name has escaped me. She was of a perfect beauty, but she had not the figure nor the grace of Lucia. There was Agnes also. I could not put one before the other, but I do none an injustice when I say that Lucia was the equal of the best.

It was over this matter of pictures that I had first met her, for her father owned a palace on the farther side of the Rialto Bridge upon the Grand Canal, and it was so packed with wall-paintings that Suchet sent a party of sappers to cut some of them out and send them to Paris. I had gone down with them, and after I had seen Lucia in tears it appeared to me that the plaster would crack if it were taken from the support of the wall. I said so, and the sappers were withdrawn. After that I was the friend of the family, and many a flask of Chianti have I cracked with the father and many a sweet lesson have I had from the daughter. Some of our French officers married in Venice that winter, and I might have done the same, for I loved her with all my heart; but Etienne Gerard has his sword, his horse, his regiment, his mother, his Emperor, and his career. A debonair Hussar has room in his life for love, but none for a wife. So I thought then, my friends, but I did not see the lonely days when I should long to clasp those vanished hands, and turn my head away when I saw old comrades with their tall children standing round their chairs. This love which I had thought was a joke and a plaything—it is only now that I understand that it is the moulder of one's life, the most solemn and sacred of all things. . . . Thank you, my friend, thank you! It is a good wine, and a second bottle cannot hurt.

And now I will tell you how my love for Lucia was the cause of one of the most terrible of all the wonderful adventures which have ever befallen me, and how it was that I came to lose the top of my right ear. You have often asked me why it was missing. To-night for the first time I will tell you.

Suchet's head-quarters at that time was the old palace of the Doge Dandolo, which stands on the lagoon not far from the place of San Marco. It was near the end of the winter, and I had returned one night from the Theatre Goldini, when I found a note from Lucia and a gondola waiting. She prayed me to come to her at once as she was in trouble. To a Frenchman and a soldier there was but one answer to such a note. In an instant I was in the boat and the gondolier was pushing out into the dark lagoon. I remember that as I took my seat in the boat I was struck by the man's great size. He was not tall, but he was one of the broadest men that I have ever seen in my life. But the gondoliers of Venice are a strong breed, and powerful men are common enough among them. The fellow took his place behind me and began to row.

A good soldier in an enemy's country should everywhere and at all times be on the alert. It has been one of the rules of my life, and if I have lived to wear grey hairs it is because I have observed it. And yet upon that night I was as careless as a foolish young recruit who fears lest he should be thought to be afraid. My pistols I had left behind in my hurry. My sword was at my belt, but it is not always the most convenient of weapons. I lay back in my seat in the gondola, lulled by the gentle swish of the water and the steady creaking of the oar. Our way lay through a network of narrow canals with high houses towering on either side and a thin slit of star-spangled sky above us. Here and there, on the bridges which spanned the canal, there was the dim glimmer of an oil lamp, and sometimes there came a gleam from some niche where a candle burned before the image of a saint. But save for this it was all black, and one could only see the water by the white fringe which curled round the long black nose of our boat. It was a place and a time for dreaming. I thought of my own past life, of all the great deeds in which I had been concerned, of the horses that I had handled, and of the women that I had loved. Then I thought also of my dear mother, and I fancied her joy when she heard the folk in the village talking about the fame of her son. Of the Emperor also I thought, and of France, the dear fatherland, the sunny France, mother of beautiful daughters and of gallant sons. My heart glowed within me as I thought of how we had brought her colours so many hundred leagues beyond her borders. To her greatness I would dedicate my life. I placed my hand upon my heart as I swore it, and at that instant the gondolier fell upon me from behind.

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"IT APPEARED TO ME THAT THE PLASTER WOULD CRACK IF IT WERE TAKEN FROM THE SUPPORT OF THE WALL."

When I say that he fell upon me I do not mean merely that he attacked me, but that he really did tumble upon me with all his weight. The fellow stands behind you and above you as he rows, so that you can neither see him nor can you in any way guard against such an assault. One moment I had sat with my mind filled with sublime resolutions, the next I was flattened out upon the bottom of the boat, the breath dashed out of my body, and this monster pinning me down. I felt the fierce pants of his hot breath upon the back of my neck. In an instant he had torn away my sword, had slipped a sack over my head, and had tied a rope firmly round the outside of it. There I was at the bottom of the gondola as helpless as a trussed fowl. I could not shout, I could not move; I was a mere bundle. An instant later I heard once more the swishing of the water and the creaking of the oar. This fellow had done his work and had resumed his journey as quietly and unconcernedly as if he were accustomed to clap a sack over a colonel of Hussars every day of the week.

I cannot tell you the humiliation and also the fury which filled my mind as I lay there like a helpless sheep being carried to the butcher's. I, Etienne Gerard, the champion of the six brigades of light cavalry and the first swordsman of the Grand Army, to be overpowered by a single unarmed man in such a fashion! Yet I lay quiet, for there is a time to resist and there is a time to save one's strength. I had felt the fellow's grip upon my arms, and I knew that I would be a child in his hands. I waited quietly, therefore, with a heart which burned with rage, until my opportunity should come.

How long I lay there at the bottom of the boat I cannot tell; but it seemed to me to be a long time, and always there were the hiss of the waters and the steady creaking of the oar. Several times we turned corners, for I heard the long, sad cry which these gondoliers give when they wish to warn their fellows that they are coming. At last, after a considerable journey, I felt the side of the boat scrape up against a landing-place. The fellow knocked three times with his oar upon wood, and in answer to his summons I heard the rasping of bars and the turning of keys. A great door creaked back upon its hinges.

"Have you got him?" asked a voice, in Italian.

My monster gave a laugh and kicked the sack in which I lay.

"Here he is," said he.

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"They are waiting." He added something which I could not understand.

"Take him, then," said my captor. He raised me in his arms, ascended some steps, and I was thrown down upon a hard floor. A moment later the bars creaked and the key whined once more. I was a prisoner inside a house.

From the voices and the steps there seemed now to be several people round me. I understand Italian a great deal better than I speak it, and I could make out very well what they were saying.

"You have not killed him, Matteo?"

"What matter if I have?"

"My faith, you will have to answer for it to the tribunal."

"They will kill him, will they not?"

"Yes, but it is not for you or me to take it out of their hands."

"Tut! I have not killed him. Dead men do not bite, and his cursed teeth met in my thumb as I pulled the sack over his head."

"He lies very quiet."

"Tumble him out and you will find he is lively enough."

The cord which bound me was undone and the sack drawn from over my head. With my eyes closed I lay motionless upon the floor.

"By the saints, Matteo, I tell you that you have broken his neck."

"Not I. He has only fainted. The better for him if he never came out of it again."

I felt a hand within my tunic.

"Matteo is right," said a voice. "His heart beats like a hammer. Let him lie and he will soon find his senses."

I waited for a minute or so and then I ventured to take a stealthy peep from between my lashes. At first I could see nothing, for I had been so long in darkness and it was but a dim light in which I found myself. Soon, however, I made out that a high and vaulted ceiling covered with painted gods and goddesses was arching over my head. This was no mean den of cut-throats into which I had been carried, but it must be the hall of some Venetian palace. Then, without movement, very slowly and stealthily I had a peep at the men who surrounded me. There was the gondolier, a swart, hard-faced, murderous ruffian, and beside him were three other men, one of them a little, twisted fellow with an air of authority and several keys in his hand, the other two tall young servants in a smart livery. As I listened to their talk I saw that the small man was the steward of the house, and that the others were under his orders.

There were four of them, then, but the little steward might be left out of the reckoning. Had I a weapon I should have smiled at such odds as those. But, hand to hand, I was no match for the one even without three others to aid him. Cunning, then, not force, must be my aid. I wished to look round for some mode of escape, and in doing so I gave an almost imperceptible movement of my head. Slight as it was it did not escape my guardians.

"Come, wake up, wake up!" cried the steward.

"Get on your feet, little Frenchman," growled the gondolier. "Get up, I say!" and for the second time he spurned me with his foot.

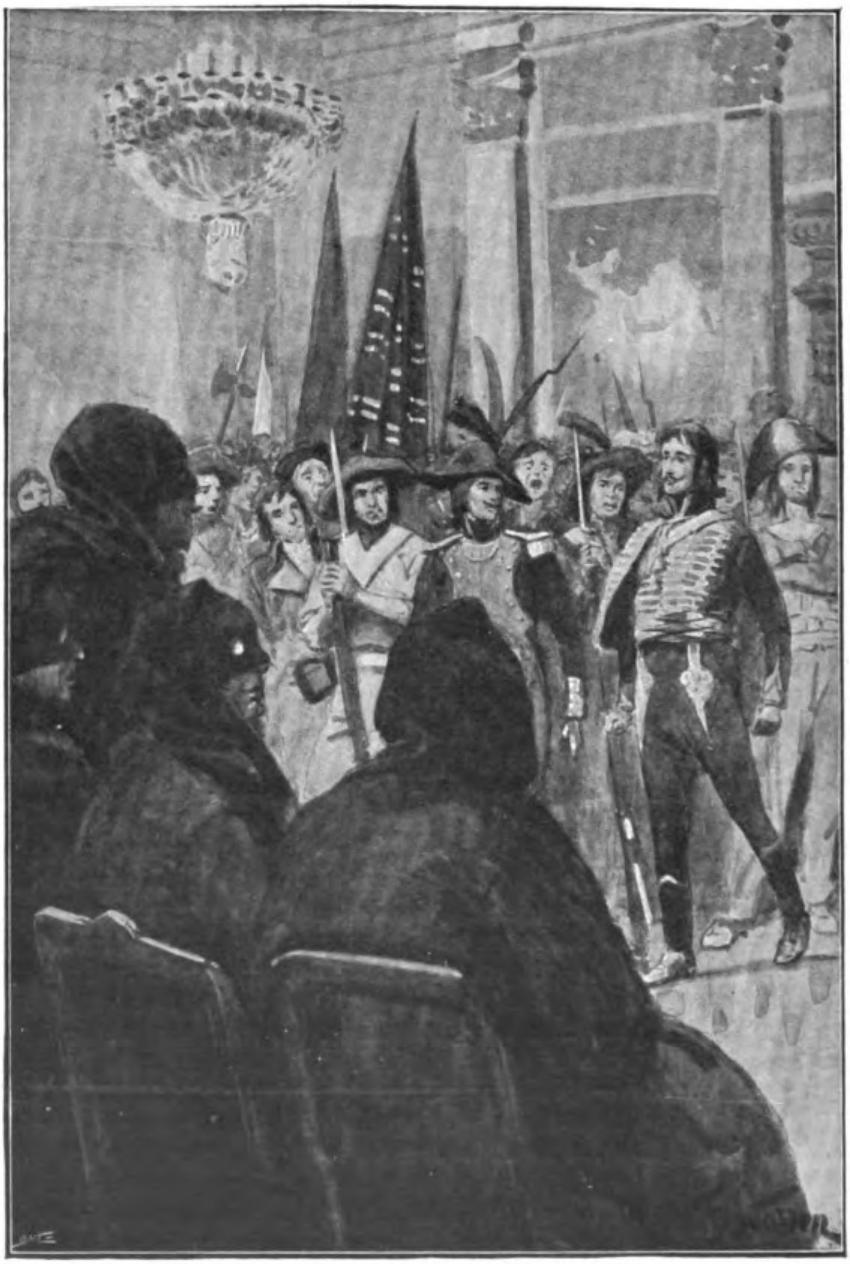
Never in the world was a command obeyed so promptly as that one. In an instant I had bounded to my feet and rushed as hard as I could run to the back of the hall. They were after me as I have seen the English hounds follow a fox, but there was a long passage down which I tore. It turned to the left and again to the left, and then I found myself back in the hall once more. They were almost within touch of me and there was no time for thought. I turned towards the staircase, but two men were coming down it. I dodged back and tried the door through which I had been brought, but it was fastened with great bars and I could not loosen them. The gondolier was on me with his knife, but I met him with a kick on the body which stretched him on his back. His dagger flew with a clatter across the marble floor. I had no time to seize it, for there were half-a-dozen of them now clutching at me. As I rushed through them the little steward thrust his leg before me and I fell with a crash, but I was up in an instant, and breaking from their grasp I burst through the very middle of them and made for a door at the other end of the hall. I reached it well in front of them, and I gave a shout of triumph as the handle turned freely in my hand, for I could see that it led to the outside and that all was clear for my escape. But I had forgotten this strange city in which I was. Every house is an island. As I flung open the door, ready to bound out into the street, the light of the hall shone upon the deep, still, black water which lay flush with the topmost step. I shrank back, and in an instant my pursuers were on me. But I am not taken so easily. Again I kicked and fought my way through them, though one of them tore

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a handful of hair from my head in his effort to hold me. The little steward struck me with a key and I was battered and bruised, but once more I cleared a way in front of me. Up the grand staircase I rushed, burst open the pair of huge folding doors which faced me, and learned at last that my efforts were in vain.

The room into which I had broken was brilliantly lighted. With its gold cornices, its massive pillars, and its painted walls and ceilings it was evidently the grand hall of some famous Venetian palace. There are many hundred such in this strange city, any one of which has rooms which would grace the Louvre or Versailles. In the centre of this great hall there was a raised daïs, and upon it in a half circle there sat twelve men all clad in black gowns, like those of a Franciscan monk, and each with a mask over the upper part of his face. A group of armed men — rough-looking rascals — were standing round the door, and amid them facing the daïs was a young fellow in the uniform of the light infantry. As he turned his head I recognised him. It was Captain Auret, of the 7th, a young Basque with whom I had drunk many a glass during the winter. He was deadly white, poor wretch, but he held himself manfully amid the assassins who surrounded him. Never shall I forget the sudden flash of hope which shone in his dark eyes when he saw a comrade burst into the room, or the look of despair which followed as he understood that I had come not to change his fate but to share it.

You can think how amazed these people were when I hurled myself into their presence. My pursuers had crowded in behind me and choked the doorway, so that all further flight was out of the question. It is at such instants that my nature asserts itself.



"WITH DIGNITY I ADVANCED TOWARDS THE TRIBUNAL."

With dignity I advanced towards the tribunal. My jacket was torn, my hair was dishevelled, my head was bleeding, but there was that in my eyes and in my carriage which made them realize that no common man was before

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them. Not a hand was raised to arrest me until I halted in front of a formidable old man whose long grey beard and masterful manner told me that both by years and by character he was the man in authority.

"Sir," said I, "you will, perhaps, tell me why I have been forcibly arrested and brought to this place. I am an honourable soldier, as is this other gentleman here, and I demand that you will instantly set us both at liberty."

There was an appalling silence to my appeal. It is not pleasant to have twelve masked faces turned upon you and to see twelve pairs of vindictive Italian eyes fixed with fierce intentness upon your face. But I stood as a debonair soldier should, and I could not but reflect how much credit I was bringing upon the Hussars of Conflans by the dignity of my bearing. I do not think that anyone could have carried himself better under such difficult circumstances. I looked with a fearless face from one assassin to another, and I waited for some reply.

It was the greybeard who at last broke the silence.

"Who is this man?" he asked.

"His name is Gerard," said the little steward at the door.

"Colonel Gerard," said I. "I will not deceive you. I am Etienne Gerard, *the* Colonel Gerard, five times mentioned in despatches and recommended for the sword of honour. I am aide-de-camp to General Suchet, and I demand my instant release, together with that of my comrade in arms."

The same terrible silence fell upon the assembly, and the same twelve pairs of merciless eyes were bent upon my face. Again it was the greybeard who spoke.

"He is out of his order. There are two names upon our list before him."

"He escaped from our hands and burst into the room."

"Let him await his turn. Take him down to the wooden cell."

"If he resist us, your excellency?"

"Bury your knives in his body. The tribunal will uphold you. Remove him until we have dealt with the others."

They advanced upon me, and for an instant I thought of resistance. It would have been a heroic death, but who was there to see it or to chronicle it? I might be only postponing my fate, and yet I had been in so many bad places and come out unhurt that I had learned always to hope and to trust my star. I allowed these rascals to seize me, and I was led from the room, the gondolier walking at my side with a long naked knife in his hand. I could see in his brutal eyes the satisfaction which it would give him if he could find some excuse for plunging it into my body.

They are wonderful places, these great Venetian houses, palaces and fortresses and prisons all in one. I was led along a passage and down a bare stone stair until we came to a short corridor from which three doors opened. Through one of these I was thrust and the spring lock closed behind me. The only light came dimly through a small grating which opened on the passage. Peering and feeling, I carefully examined the chamber in which I had been placed. I understood from what I had heard that I should soon have to leave it again in order to appear before this tribunal, but still it is not my nature to throw away any possible chances.

The stone floor of the cell was so damp and the walls for some feet high were so slimy and foul that it was evident they were beneath the level of the water. A single slanting hole high up near the ceiling was the only aperture for light or air. Through it I saw one bright star shining down upon me, and the sight filled me with comfort and with hope. I have never been a man of religion, though I have always had a respect for those who were, but I remember that night that the star shining down the shaft seemed to be an all-seeing eye which was upon me, and I felt as a young and frightened recruit might feel in battle when he saw the calm gaze of his colonel turned upon him.

Three of the sides of my prison were formed of stone, but the fourth was of wood, and I could see that it had only recently been erected. Evidently a partition had been thrown up to divide a single large cell into two smaller ones. There was no hope for me in the old walls, in the tiny window, or in the massive door. It was only in this one direction of the wooden screen that there was any possibility of exploring. My reason told me that if I should pierce it—which did not seem very difficult—it would only be to find myself in another cell as strong as that in which I then was. Yet I had always rather be doing something than doing nothing, so I bent all my attention and all my energies upon the wooden wall. Two planks were badly joined, and so loose that I was certain I could easily detach them. I searched about for some tool, and I found one in the leg of a small bed which stood in

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the corner. I forced the end of this into the chink of the planks, and I was about to twist them outwards when the sound of rapid footsteps caused me to pause and to listen.

I wish I could forget what I heard. Many a hundred men have I seen die in battle, and I have slain more myself than I care to think of, but all that was fair fight and the duty of a soldier. It was a very different matter to listen to a murder in this den of assassins. They were pushing someone along the passage, someone who resisted and who clung to my door as he passed. They must have taken him into the third cell, the one which was farthest from me. "Help! Help!" cried a voice, and then I heard a blow and a scream. "Help! Help!" cried the voice again, and then "Gerard! Colonel Gerard!" It was my poor captain of infantry whom they were slaughtering. "Murderers! Murderers!" I yelled, and I kicked at my door, but again I heard him shout and then everything was silent. A minute later there was a heavy splash, and I knew that no human eye would ever see Auret again. He had gone as a hundred others had gone whose names were missing from the roll-calls of their regiments during that winter in Venice.



"HIS HANDS DARTED IN AND OUT OR WRITHED TOGETHER IN AN AGONY OF ENTREATY."

The steps returned along the passage, and I thought that they were coming for me. Instead of that they opened the door of the cell next to mine and they took someone out of it. I heard the steps die away up the stair. At once I renewed my work upon the planks, and within a very few minutes I had loosened them in such a way that I could remove and replace them at pleasure. Passing through the aperture I found myself in the farther cell, which, as I expected, was the other half of the one in which I had been confined. I was not any nearer to escape than I had been before, for there was no other wooden wall which I could penetrate and the spring lock of the door had been closed. There were no traces to show who was my companion in misfortune. Closing the two loose planks behind me I returned to my own cell and waited there with all the courage which I could command for the summons which would probably be my death-knell.

It was a long time in coming, but at last I heard the sound of feet once more in the passage, and I nerved myself to listen to some other odious deed and to hear the cries of the poor victim. Nothing of the kind occurred, however, and the prisoner was placed in the cell without violence. I had no time to peep through my hole of communication, for next moment my own door was flung open and my rascally gondolier, with the other assassins, came into the cell.

"Come, Frenchman," said he. He held his blood-stained knife in his great hairy hand, and I read in his fierce eyes that he only looked for some excuse in order to plunge it into my heart. Resistance was useless. I followed without a word. I was led up the stone stair and back into that gorgeous chamber in which I had left the secret tribunal. I was ushered in, but to my surprise it was not on me that their attention was fixed. One of their own number, a tall,

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dark young man, was standing before them and was pleading with them in low, earnest tones. His voice quivered with anxiety and his hands darted in and out or writhed together in an agony of entreaty. "You cannot do it! You cannot do it!" he cried. "I implore the tribunal to reconsider this decision."

"Stand aside, brother," said the old man who presided. "The case is decided and another is up for judgment."

"For Heaven's sake be merciful!" cried the young man.

"We have already been merciful," the other answered. "Death would have been a small penalty for such an offence. Be silent and let judgment take its course."

I saw the young man throw himself in an agony of grief into his chair. I had no time, however, to speculate as to what it was which was troubling him, for his eleven colleagues had already fixed their stern eyes upon me. The moment of fate had arrived.

"You are Colonel Gerard?" said the terrible old man.

"I am."

"Aide-de-camp to the robber who calls himself General Suchet, who in turn represents that arch-robber Buonaparte?"

It was on my lips to tell him that he was a liar, but there is a time to argue and a time to be silent.

"I am an honourable soldier," said I. "I have obeyed my orders and done my duty."

The blood flushed into the old man's face and his eyes blazed through his mask.

"You are thieves and murderers, every man of you," he cried. "What are you doing here? You are Frenchmen. Why are you not in France? Did we invite you to Venice? By what right are you here? Where are our pictures? Where are the horses of St. Mark? Who are you that you should pilfer those treasures which our fathers through so many centuries have collected? We were a great city when France was a desert. Your drunken, brawling, ignorant soldiers have undone the work of saints and heroes. What have you to say to it?"

He was, indeed, a formidable old man, for his white beard bristled with fury and he barked out the little sentences like a savage hound. For my part I could have told him that his pictures would be safe in Paris, that his horses were really not worth making a fuss about, and that he could see heroes—I say nothing of saints—without going back to his ancestors or even moving out of his chair. All this I could have pointed out, but one might as well argue with a Mamaluke about religion. I shrugged my shoulders and said nothing.

"The prisoner has no defence," said one of my masked judges.

"Has anyone any observation to make before judgment is passed?" The old man glared round him at the others.

"There is one matter, your excellency," said another. "It can scarce be referred to without re-opening a brother's wounds, but I would remind you that there is a very particular reason why an exemplary punishment should be inflicted in the case of this officer."

"I had not forgotten it," the old man answered. "Brother, if the tribunal has injured you in one direction, it will give you ample satisfaction in another."

The young man who had been pleading when I entered the room staggered to his feet.

"I cannot endure it," he cried. "Your excellency must forgive me. The tribunal can act without me. I am ill. I am mad." He flung his hands out with a furious gesture and rushed from the room.

"Let him go! Let him go!" said the president. "It is, indeed, more than can be asked of flesh and blood that he should remain under this roof. But he is a true Venetian, and when the first agony is over he will understand that it could not be otherwise."

I had been forgotten during this episode, and though I am not a man who is accustomed to being overlooked I should have been all the happier had they continued to neglect me. But now the old president glared at me again like a tiger who comes back to his victim.

"You shall pay for it all, and it is but justice that you should," said he. "You, an upstart adventurer and foreigner, have dared to raise your eyes in love to the grand-daughter of a Doge of Venice who was already betrothed to the heir of the Loredans. He who enjoys such privileges must pay a price for them."

"It cannot be higher than they are worth," said I.

"You will tell us that when you have made a part payment," said he. "Perhaps your spirit may not be so proud by that time. Matteo, you will lead this prisoner to the wooden cell. To-night is Monday. Let him have no food or water, and let him be led before the tribunal again on Wednesday night. We shall then decide upon the death which he is to die."

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It was not a pleasant prospect, and yet it was a reprieve. One is thankful for small mercies when a hairy savage with a blood-stained knife is standing at one's elbow. He dragged me from the room and I was thrust down the stairs and back into my cell. The door was locked and I was left to my reflections.

My first thought was to establish connection with my neighbour in misfortune. I waited until the steps had died away, and then I cautiously drew aside the two boards and peeped through. The light was very dim, so dim that I could only just discern a figure huddled in the corner, and I could hear the low whisper of a voice which prayed as one prays who is in deadly fear. The boards must have made a creaking. There was a sharp exclamation of surprise.

"Courage, friend, courage!" I cried. "All is not lost. Keep a stout heart, for Etienne Gerard is by your side."

"Etienne!" It was a woman's voice which spoke — a voice which was always music to my ears. I sprang through the gap and I flung my arms round her. "Lucia! Lucia!" I cried.

It was "Etienne!" and "Lucia!" for some minutes, for one does not make speeches at moments like that. It was she who came to her senses first.

"Oh, Etienne, they will kill you. How came you into their hands?"

"In answer to your letter."

"I wrote no letter."

"The cunning demons! But you?"

"I came also in answer to your letter."

"Lucia, I wrote no letter."

"They have trapped us both with the same bait."

"I care nothing about myself, Lucia. Besides, there is no pressing danger with me. They have simply returned me to my cell."

"Oh, Etienne, Etienne, they will kill you. Lorenzo is there."

"The old greybeard?"

"No, no, a young dark man. He loved me, and I thought I loved him until . . . until I learned what love is, Etienne. He will never forgive you. He has a heart of stone."

"Let them do what they like. They cannot rob me of the past, Lucia. But you — what about you?"

"It will be nothing, Etienne. Only a pang for an instant and then all over. They mean it as a badge of infamy, dear, but I will carry it like a crown of honour since it was through you that I gained it."

Her words froze my blood with horror. All my adventures were insignificant compared to this terrible shadow which was creeping over my soul.

"Lucia! Lucia!" I cried. "For pity's sake tell me what



"I PUT MY HAND TO EACH LITTLE VELVET SHELL."

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these butchers are about to do. Tell me, Lucia! Tell me!"

"I will not tell you, Etienne, for it would hurt you far more than it would me. Well, well, I will tell you lest you should fear it was something worse. The president has ordered that my ear be cut off, that I may be marked for ever as having loved a Frenchman."

Her ear! The dear little ear which I had kissed so often. I put my hand to each little velvet shell to make certain that this sacrilege had not yet been committed. Only over my dead body should they reach them. I swore it to her between my clenched teeth.

"You must not care, Etienne. And yet I love that you should care all the same."

"They shall not hurt you—the fiends!"

"I have hopes, Etienne. Lorenzo is there. He was silent while I was judged, but he may have pleaded for me after I was gone."

"He did. I heard him."

"Then he may have softened their hearts."

I knew that it was not so, but how could I bring myself to tell her? I might as well have done so, for with the quick instinct of woman my silence was speech to her.

"They would not listen to him! You need not fear to tell me, dear, for you will find that I am worthy to be loved by such a soldier. Where is Lorenzo now?"

"He left the hall."

"Then he may have left the house as well."

"I believe that he did."

"He has abandoned me to my fate. Etienne, Etienne, they are coming!"

Afar off I heard those fateful steps and the jingle of distant keys. What were they coming for now, since there were no other prisoners to drag to judgment? It could only be to carry out the sentence upon my darling. I stood between her and the door, with the strength of a lion in my limbs. I would tear the house down before they should touch her.

"Go back! Go back!" she cried. "They will murder you, Etienne. My life, at least, is safe. For the love you bear me, Etienne, go back. It is nothing. I will make no sound. You will not hear that it is done."

She wrestled with me, this delicate creature, and by main force she dragged me to the opening between the cells. But a sudden thought had crossed my mind.

"We may yet be saved," I whispered. "Do what I tell you at once and without argument. Go into my cell. Quick!"

I pushed her through the gap and helped her to replace the planks. I had retained her cloak in my hands, and with this wrapped round me I crept into the darkest corner of her cell. There I lay when the door was opened and several men came in. I had reckoned that they would bring no lantern, for they had none with them before. To their eyes I was only a dark blur in the corner.

"Bring a light," said one of them.

"No, no; curse it!" cried a rough voice, which I knew to be that of the ruffian Matteo. "It is not a job that I like, and the more I saw it the less I should like it. I am sorry, signora, but the order of the tribunal has to be obeyed."

My impulse was to spring to my feet and to rush through them all and out by the open door. But how would that help Lucia? Suppose that I got clear away, she would be in their hands until I could come back with help, for single-handed I could not hope to clear a way for her. All this flashed through my mind in an instant, and I saw that the only course for me was to lie still, take what came, and wait my chance. The fellow's coarse hand felt about among my curls—those curls in which only a woman's fingers had ever wandered. The next instant he gripped my ear and a pain shot through me as if I had been touched with a hot iron. I bit my lip to stifle a cry, and I felt the blood run warm down my neck and back.

"There, thank Heaven, that's over," said the fellow, giving me a friendly pat on the head. "You're a brave girl, signora, I'll say that for you, and I only wish you'd have better taste than to love a Frenchman. You can blame him and not me for what I have done."

What could I do save to lie still and grind my teeth at my own helplessness? At the same time my pain and my rage were always soothed by the reflection that I had suffered for the woman whom I loved. It is the custom of men to say to ladies that they would willingly endure any pain for their sake, but it was my privilege to show that I had said no more than I meant. I thought also how nobly I would seem to have acted if ever the story came to be told, and how proud the regiment of Conflans might well be of their colonel. These thoughts helped me to suffer in silence while the blood still trickled over my neck and dripped upon the stone floor. It was that sound which nearly led to my destruction.

"She's bleeding fast," said one of the

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"THE NEXT INSTANT HE GRIPPED MY EAR."

valets. "You had best fetch a surgeon or you will find her dead in the morning."

"She lies very still and she has never opened her mouth," said another. "The shock has killed her."

"Nonsense; a young woman does not die so easily." It was Matteo who spoke. "Besides, I did but snip off enough to leave the tribunal's mark upon her. Rouse up, signora, rouse up!"

He shook me by the shoulder, and my heart stood still for fear he should feel the epaulette under the mantle.

"How is it with you now?" he asked.

I made no answer.

"Curse it, I wish I had to do with a man instead of a woman, and the fairest woman in Venice," said the gondolier. "Here, Nicholas, lend me your handkerchief and bring a light."

It was all over. The worst had happened. Nothing could save me. I still crouched in the corner, but I was tense in every muscle, like a wild cat about to spring. If I had to die I was determined that my end should be worthy of my life.

One of them had gone for a lamp and Matteo was stooping over me with a handkerchief. In another instant my secret would be discovered. But he suddenly drew himself straight and stood motionless. At the same instant there came a confused murmuring sound through the little window far above my head. It was the rattle of oars and the buzz of many voices. Then there was a crash upon the door upstairs, and a terrible voice roared: "Open! Open in the name of the Emperor!"

The Emperor! It was like the mention of some saint which, by its very sound, can frighten the demons. Away they ran with cries of terror—Matteo, the valets, the steward, all of the murderous gang. Another shout and then the crash of a hatchet and the splintering of planks. There were the rattle of arms and the cries of French soldiers in the hall. Next instant feet came flying down the stair and a man burst frantically into my cell.

"Lucia!" he cried, "Lucia!" He stood in the dim light, panting and unable to find his words. Then he broke out again. "Have I not shown you how I love you, Lucia? What more could I do to prove it? I have betrayed my country, I have broken my vow, I have ruined my friends, and I have given my life in order to save you."

It was young Lorenzo Loredan, the lover whom I had superseded. My heart was heavy for him at the time, but after all it is every man for himself in love, and if one fails in the game it is some consolation to lose to one who can be a graceful and considerate winner. I was about to point this out to him, but at the first word I uttered he gave a shout of astonishment, and, rushing out, he seized the lamp which hung in the corridor and flashed it in my face.

"It is you, you villain!" he cried. "You French coxcomb. You shall pay me for the wrong which you have done me."

But the next instant he saw the pallor of

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my face and the blood which was still pouring from my head.

"What is this?" he asked. "How come you to have lost your ear?"

I shook off my weakness, and pressing my handkerchief to my wound I rose from my couch, the debonair colonel of Hussars.

"My injury, sir, is nothing. With your permission we will not allude to a matter so trifling and so personal."



"MY INJURY, SIR, IS NOTHING."

But Lucia had burst through from her cell and was pouring out the whole story while she clasped Lorenzo's arm.

"This noble gentleman — he has taken my place, Lorenzo! He has borne it for me. He has suffered that I might be saved."

I could sympathize with the struggle which I could see in the Italian's face. At last he held out his hand to me.

"Colonel Gerard," he said, "you are worthy of a great love. I forgive you, for if you have wronged me you have made a noble atonement. But I wonder to see you alive. I left the tribunal before you were judged, but I understood that no mercy would be shown to any Frenchman since the destruction of the ornaments of Venice."

"He did not destroy them," cried Lucia. "He has helped to preserve those in our palace."

"One of them, at any rate," said I, as I stooped and kissed her hand.

This was the way, my friends, in which I lost my ear. Lorenzo was found stabbed to the heart in the Piazza of St. Mark within two days of the night of my adventure. Of the tribunal and its ruffians, Matteo and three others were shot, the rest banished from the town. Lucia, my lovely Lucia, retired into a convent at Murano after the French had left the city, and there she still may be, some gentle lady abbess who has perhaps long forgotten the days when our hearts throbbed together, and when the whole great world seemed so small a thing beside the love which burned in our veins. Or perhaps it may not be so. Perhaps she has not forgotten. There may still be times when the peace of the cloister is broken by the memory of the old soldier who loved her in those distant days. Youth is past and passion is gone, but the soul of the gentleman can never change, and still Etienne Gerard would bow his grey head before her and would very gladly lose this other ear if he might do her a service.

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle has in hand several other Adventures of the Brigadier, which will appear in due course. — ED.

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Pictures and Parodies.

By Rudolph de Cordova.



From the Painting by "MUSCIPULA." [*Sir Joshua Reynolds.*

TO the humorist nothing is sacred. Anything, everything, he turns from its purpose to make it serve his end—laughter. That laughter may, nay often does, serve a useful purpose, for the humorist is invariably a man who devotes his talent to

> Eye Nature's walks, shoot folly as it flies,
> And catch the manners living as they rise.

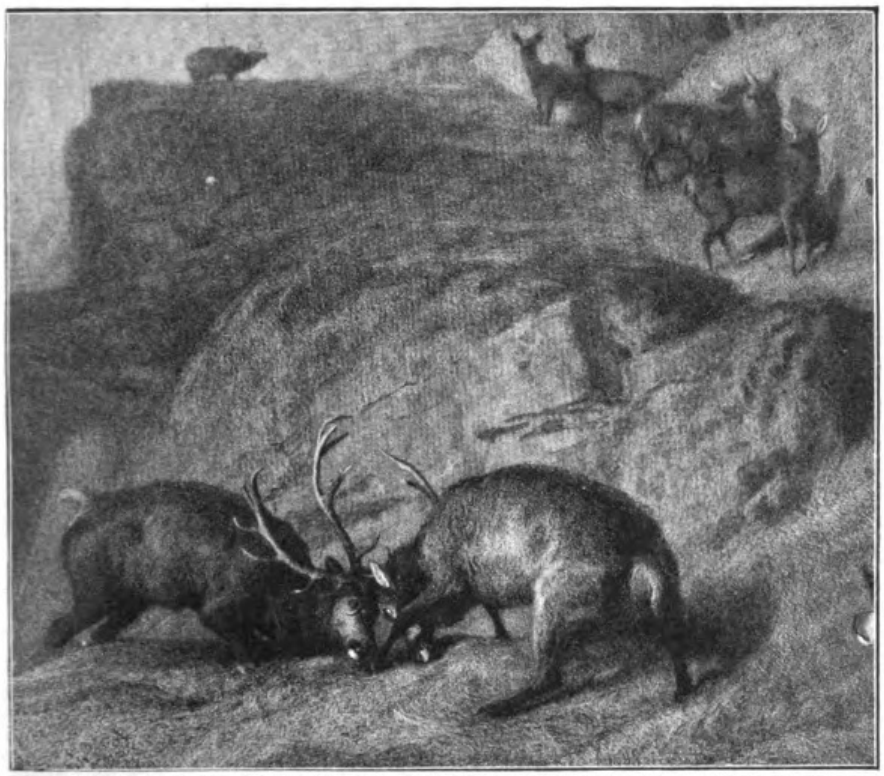
The parodists of the poets are probably more numerous than the poets themselves, though not so well known, while the picture parodists have probably existed ever since the first prehistoric man took to drawing animals on bones or the rocky walls of his cave. A social or political, rather than a personal, bent has, for the most part, been the use to which the pictorial humorist has put the work he has parodied, and it is astonishing how often the touch of genius is given to making funny a subject which would not apparently lend itself to that sort of treatment.

Sir Joshua Reynolds's "Muscipula" (The Mousetrap) was early in 1840 turned to political purposes by James Doyle, whose work was published with the signature "H. B." He was inspired by an event which, though unknown to the ordinary student of history, created an intense excitement in the political world at the time. In his parody it is Lord John Russell who takes the place of the little girl, while the mouse in the trap is Sheriff Evans, one of the two Sheriffs of Middlesex, the hero of the event, and the cat which watches the proceedings is Sir Robert Peel. The case arose out of an action by Mr. Stockdale against the Sheriffs to recover £600 damages awarded by the jury, together with costs, from Messrs. Hansard, whose goods were sold to defray the costs. On a motion by Lord John Russell, the House of Commons voted that the levy of execution of £646 on the property of Messrs. Hansard was a breach of privilege of the House. When this was carried he moved further



PARODY BY JAMES DOYLE.

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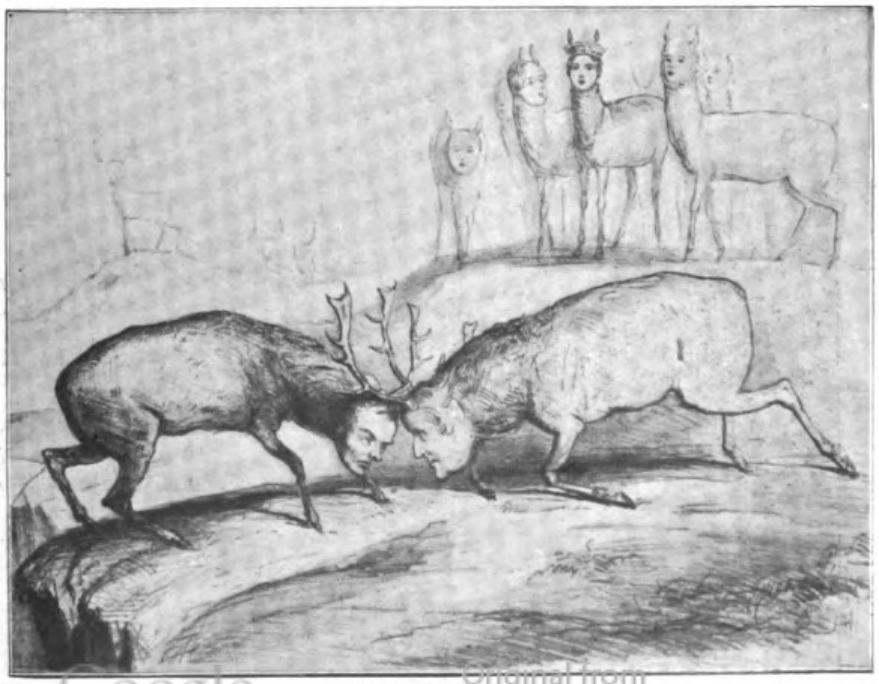


Portion of the Picture] "NONE BUT THE BRAVE DESERVE THE FAIR." *[by Sir E. Landseer.*

motions that the Sheriffs be ordered to refund the said £646 to Messrs. Hansard, and that they should be committed to the custody of the Serjeant-at-Arms. The case also came before the Court of Queen's Bench, which ordered them to pay the money to Stockdale, so that the unfortunate Sheriffs were on the horns of a dilemma. The House of Commons, however, carried the matter with a high hand, and both Sheriffs were imprisoned in the House. After a few days Mr. Wheelton, one of them, was released, but Mr. Evans remained in custody in spite of many attempts to get him freed. It was even declared that the confinement was injuring his health, and physicians were brought to the Bar of the House to give evidence on the point and to be examined by the members, Mr. Gladstone taking a not unimportant part in the proceedings. Then the House divided, but the majority was against freeing the Sheriff, who held what were almost levées in his prison, and the *Times* used to print nearly every day the names of prominent men who visited him.

From early in January until the middle of April he remained a prisoner, until at last the House of Commons passed a resolution that he should be discharged from custody.

Landseer's "None But the Brave Deserve the Fair," which was described as "Mr. E. Landseer's admired picture seen in a new point of view," represents Lord John Russell and Sir Robert Peel fighting over what was known as the "Bedchamber Question" in 1838, while the Queen, recognised as one of the does crowned, and several ladies look at the conflict, in which the Duke of Wellington is also interested. Peel noticed that the two ladies most closely in attendance on Her



PARODY BY JAMES DOYLE.

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From the Painting by] "SCOTLAND FOR EVER!" [*Lady Butler.*

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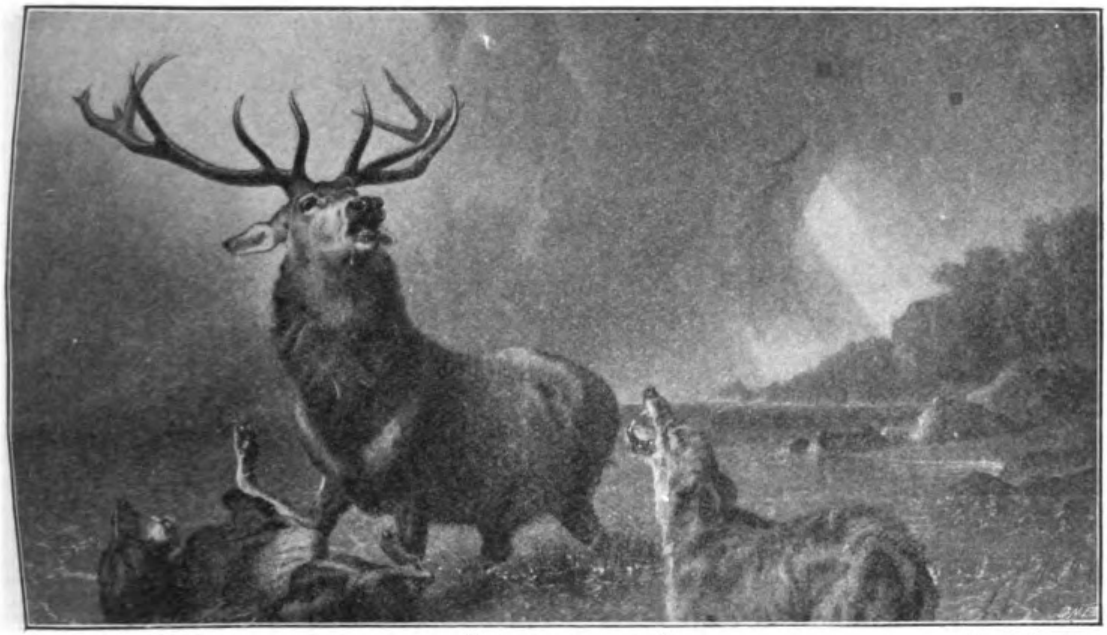
Majesty were Lady Normanby and the sister of Lord Morpeth. He felt that it was impossible for him to work the Government while the wife and sister of the statesmen whose policy he wanted to change entirely were the Queen's closest companions. Somehow, however, he managed to convey to the Queen not that very reasonable point, but that he meant to insist on the removal of all her familiar attendants and household associates. Her Majesty told Sir Robert "she could not consent to a course she conceived to be contrary to usage and is repugnant to her feelings."

The question caused the greatest excitement throughout the country, and it was at this time that O'Connell referred to the Queen as "that young creature of only nineteen, as pure as she is exalted, who listened not to her head, but to the overflowing feelings of her young heart." Her Majesty had her own way.



"IRELAND FOR EVER."—PARODY BY TOM MERRY.

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From the Painting by] "THE STAG AT BAY." *[Sir E. Landseer.*

When the *St. Stephen's Review* was being published, its cartoons, which were drawn by Mr. Tom Merry, attracted a great deal of attention, not only by reason of their merit, but also for the fact that, like the cartoons of the American periodicals and unlike those in our own weekly publications, they were printed in colour. Of the most brilliant examples of his skill which I have selected not the least conspicuous is his parody on Lady Butler's famous "Scotland for Ever," which he called "Ireland for Ever." In connection with the week's cartoon there was always published a little story illustrating it. The story of this one was that old Jonathan Hickman came to town for Easter, and promised to take Mrs. Hickman back a print of "Scotland for Ever." He bought the picture, and when he returned to his hotel he got talking with some people, and under the influence of a heated discussion he declared that "the Gladstonians had sunk every British interest for the sake of Ireland, and that Lord Salisbury had not done enough for the British farmer." Then he had three more whiskies and went to his room. There he conceived the desire of once more looking at his purchase, and opening the brown-paper parcel he found, under the influence of the spirit, that "the



PARODY BY JAMES DOYLE.

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From the Painting by] "GARRICK BETWEEN TRAGEDY AND COMEDY." *[Sir Joshua Reynolds.*

horses had changed to pigs, and in place of the gallant Scotchmen it was a last charge of the Separatist Party, their shillelaghs poised in their hands, having carved on them ugly little heads which frowned and grinned in the most horrible fashion." So excellent are the likenesses that no one can fail to recognise them. Reading from left to right they are, in the front row, Mr. Labouchere, Mr. Healy, Mr. John Morley, Sir William Vernon Harcourt, Mr. Gladstone, Mr. T. P. O'Connor, Mr. Parnell, Mr. Biggar, and Mr. O'Brien.

In view of the recent Budget of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Doyle's parody of "The Stag at Bay," which he announced as having been "suggested by the beautiful picture of Edwin Landseer, Esq., R.A., exhibited at the Royal Academy, 1846," has something of a topical interest, though the three personages represented have long since passed away. The stag at bay is Pitt, with Lord George Bentinck as the dog on his back, and Lord Beaconsfield, then, of course, Benjamin Disraeli, easily recognisable by his wealth of black curls, as the dog on the right.

It was the Corn Law which Peel introduced that led to the parody of "The Stag at Bay." He proposed a duty of ten shillings a quarter on corn when it was less than forty-eight shillings a quarter, the duty to be reduced by a shilling for every shilling corn rose until it reached fifty-three shillings a quarter, when the duty would remain at four shillings. This arrangement was to hold good for three years with other Customs duties, which the Opposition loudly denounced. In his speeches in this debate Disraeli called Peel a "trader on other people's intelligence, a political burglar of other men's ideas," and he declared that "the occupants of the Treasury Bench were political pedlars who had bought their party in the cheapest market and sold it in the dearest."

The debate lasted twelve nights, and the Government won by 337 votes to 240, but



"A GREAT ACTOR BETWEEN TRAGEDY AND COMEDY." — PARODY BY JAMES DOYLE.

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"UNCLE TOBY AND THE WIDOW WADMAN."
From the Painting by C. R. Leslie, R.A.

the majority was not so large as was expected. This parody appeared on June 26th, 1846, the day after the Corn Bill was read for the third time in the Lords; and a very few days after the stag that had stood so proudly at bay was dragged down and the Ministry fell.

It was Reynolds's picture of David Garrick as "a great actor between Tragedy and Comedy" which Doyle parodied with such happy effect, representing William IV. between Lord Brougham as Comedy and Lord Grey as Tragedy in the early part of 1834. "The comic literature of more than a generation has no subject more fruitful than the vanity and restlessness of Lord Brougham," wrote Mr. Justin McCarthy, and here he is presented in a distinctly humorous light. The caricaturist happily crystallized in his sketch the position of the Sovereign between the two famous Ministers. Brougham at that time was scheming to separate Lord Grey from his followers that he and his party generally might retain office, he himself hoping to get the Treasury after Lord Grey had gone out. The original was no doubt a favourite picture with Doyle, for eleven years after he used it again for a parody, with O'Connell as Comedy, Peel as Garrick, and Sir R. Inglis as Tragedy.

It is remarkable, when we remember how many years Sir John Tenniel contributed the political cartoon to *Punch*, that the number of famous pictures he parodied was exceedingly few. Among them was the picture of Uncle Toby and Widow Wadman in the sentry-box, after the well-known picture by Charles R. Leslie, R.A. The scene from "Tristram Shandy" is that in which Uncle Toby, looking into the widow's eye, said: "I protest, madam, I can see nothing whatever in your eye." "It's not in the white," said Mrs. Wadman. "My Uncle Toby looked with might and main into the pupil."

For the purposes of *Punch* this was perverted with an ingenuity the more remarkable in that, as will be seen, very little has been altered. The date of the cartoon is April 22nd, 1893, and few people will require to be reminded that it was at that time



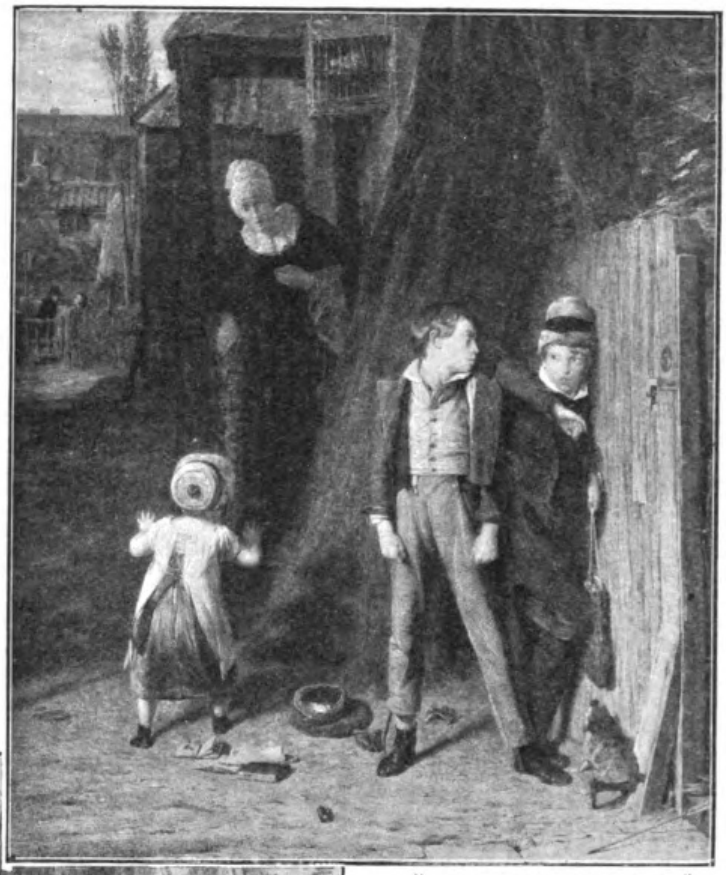
PARODY BY SIR JOHN TENNIEL.
MODERN ULSTER VERSION.—Mrs. Ulster: "Now, Mr. Bull, do you see any 'Green' in my eye?"
(By permission of the Proprietors of *Punch*.)

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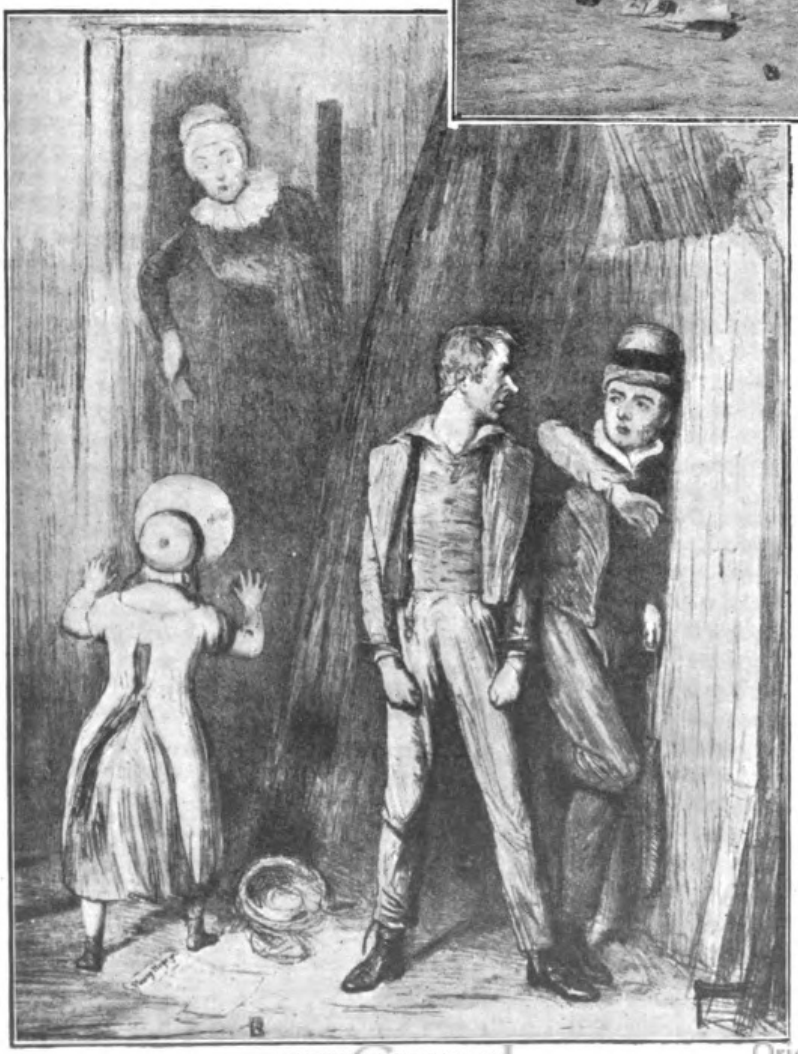
the Home Rule Bill had just been introduced into Parliament, and it was declared by some people in Ulster that the North would neither stand a Home Rule Parliament nor fail to support the Unionists of the South in their resistance to it. Seizing that idea, Sir John represented Ulster as the Widow Wadman asking John Bull, as Uncle Toby, "Do you see any green in my eye?"

It may be added in passing that the Uncle Toby of the original is supposed to be a portrait of Bannister, the comedian.

Mulready's "The Wolf and the Lamb" was another subject in which Lord Brougham figured, this time as the aggressive boy bullying Lord Melbourne, while the little girl represents Queen Victoria, and the old woman is



"THE WOLF AND THE LAMB."
From the Painting by W. Mulready, R.A.



PARODY BY JAMES DOYLE.

the Duke of Wellington. The parody appeared in 1838, at the time when Canadian affairs were occupying the attention of the country, and Lord Durham was sent out as Governor-General to the Colony. It was the policy of Lord Durham, who, as Mr. Justin McCarthy said, "made a country and marred a career," which offered Brougham the opportunity of venting his hatred on Lord Melbourne and his Ministry. The Prime Minister, indeed, made a very weak defence in the House of Lords when Brougham attacked him, going so far on one occasion as to say "the fellow was in such a state of excitement that if I had said a word he would have gone stark, staring mad."

"Cupid and Psyche" is

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"THE NUPTIALS OF CUPID AND PSYCHE."
From the Drawing by G. B. Cipriani, R.A.



PARODY BY JAMES GILLRAY.

a travesty of Bartolozzi's celebrated engraving from the drawing by Cipriani. Cupid in this case is the Earl of Derby, and Psyche Miss Farren, who, contrary to the general belief, was by no means the first actress to be raised to the peerage, for Miss Fenton, the original Polly in "The Beggar's Opera," had earlier become the Duchess of Bolton. For some reason Miss Farren, one of the greatest beauties of her time, was always an object of Gillray's determined hostility, and the Earl of Derby, on account of his political principles, was a frequent subject of Gillray's wit. Why the artist should have been opposed to the actress no one seems to know, for she was a most estimable woman in every way. Queen Charlotte herself became, as it were, a surety for Miss Farren's reputation to succeeding generations. Soon after she married the Earl the actress wrote to the Queen and asked whether she would be admitted to Her Majesty's Drawing Rooms, and the Queen replied that she would be very happy to receive her, as she had always understood that Miss Farren's conduct was most exemplary.

It will be noticed with what admirable humour Gillray has transformed the basket of love-apples with which the leading characters in the original are crowded into the Earl's coronet—a touch of real caricature which cannot be too highly commended.



"BUBBLES."—PARODY BY TOM MERRY.

Not less happy was the parody of Sir John Everett Millais's "Bubbles," a picture which is better known than almost any other in the world by reason of its having been used for the purpose of an advertisement. It was the outcome of the famous Hansard Union, which the *St. Stephen's Review* at the time declared to be "financially unsound," and represents the then Lord Mayor of London blowing bubbles.

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A STRANGE CASE OF ART AND CRAFT.

By Geo. Manville Fenn.

I.

MRS. DUNBY said "Thank goodness!" when the carriage rolled away from the great house at the corner of Quarrill Square, to be followed by two luggage-laden cabs in the charge of Thompson and Mrs. Repton, valet and maid to the Ehrenbergs, bound for Vienna, *viâ* Charing Cross.

The exclamation was on account of Ehrenberg being "a bit of a trial," and his lady's health in that personage's estimation terrible, while the departure for the Continent meant six weeks' perfect peace, inasmuch as the house was to be shut up, the servants placed upon board wages, no tradesmen to invade the place for painting or other repairs, no cleaning to be undertaken. In short, there was nothing to be done but cover the pictures, statues, furniture, and bric-à-brac in the big salon and long gallery.

There were periodical "cleanings," but when they did take place it was under Ehrenberg's own superintendence, for the old mansion was a perfect store of what the French call *objets de vertu*, "picked up" by their owner during his travels, sent home to be stood up, hung, or enclosed in cases, where they became, like the rest of the collection, "of fabulous value," and stayed there till they were in the course of time "placed"—in other words, sold at two, three, four, or five hundred per cent. profit. But let it not be supposed that Ehrenberg was a shopkeeper or tradesman. Nothing of the kind; he only, to use his own expression, "made a deal" sometimes, and the said deal might be a Vandyke, a Murillo, or Guido, an inlaid and chased suit of armour, a piece of genuine Greek sculpture, or a guaranteed mummy from the latest discovery in Egyptian tombs.

Let it suffice that those "in the know" declared Ehrenberg to be ground to the finest edge of sharpness, and that Mrs. Ehrenberg's diamonds were the envy and admiration of society, in which they freely mixed.

Mrs. Dunby, the housekeeper, then, said "Thank goodness!" in anticipation of a quiet rest, which was not likely to be disturbed unless she was called upon to receive an odd packing-case or two, containing something that her employer had "picked up" on his way, and she calmly and deliberately during the first week superintended the draping of statues, the covering of the gallery pictures, and the guarding of the treasure chambers generally against the insidious attacks of their great enemy in London, a combination of soot and dust.

Eight days had passed, the work was done, and Berry, the butler, informed Mrs. Dunby that as it was so fine he should take a run down to Brighton; and he went.

The door had hardly closed upon his exit when Rimmer, the under-butler, and Small, the footman, appeared out of uniform, as they termed it, and most respectfully asked leave to go up to Lord's for an hour or two to have a look at the great cricket match.

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Mrs. Dunby expressed her surprise at such an application being made to her the moment Mr. Berry's back was turned; but the housekeeper was old—the *Mrs.* did not mean matrimonial rank, being only used as a title which carried weight—and the under-butler and footman were both very fine men, a carefully-selected pair. Moreover, Mrs. D. was in a particularly good humour that morning, and she gave her consent.



"MRS. DUNBY EXPRESSED HER SURPRISE."

Then it happened that the favoured menials had gone no farther towards Lord's Cricket Ground than the Running Linkman, which old-world hostelry, as everyone knows, is in the narrow street at the back of Quarrill Square, when a very new-looking pantechnicon van, painted bronze-green and drawn by a pair of sturdy-looking horses, drew up in front of the entrance steps.

It was a particularly good-looking van, bearing in gilt letters of running hand the proprietors' names, "HOFFMANN FRÈRES," and beneath, in smaller letters, "Berlin, Paris, London."

As the great van stopped, a heavy, quietly dressed, black-bearded man got down from beside the driver, and four others of the regular porter or furniture-remover type descended from their tail-board seat, upon which they had been swinging their legs, two of them casting loose a couple of well-filled nose-bags, which they carried to the front and adjusted over the muzzles of the sniffing horses. Meanwhile, the short, square, heavy-looking man went up to the door, rang, and stood extricating a thick, bronze-green, oblong book from his pocket, lettered like the van, "Hoffmann Frères," but with, in addition to the above-named cities, the words, "Continental carriers."

Mrs. Dunby opened the front door herself and let the sunshine into the gloomy, holland-draped hall, just as the visitor slowly drew a short, stubby pencil from the loops of leather which kept the book closed, holding it so that the inscription on the book could easily be read.

"Goot morning, mattam," he said, in a guttural German voice. "Mister Ehrenberg's?"

"Yes; what is it?" said the housekeeper, taking in book, man, followers, van, and horses in one quick, suspicious glance, which suggested her thoughts: "If you have come to fetch something, you'll go back without it."

"Ach! Id is right," replied the man, adjusting the spectacles he wore before opening the book and making a dash at a much-used slip of blotting-paper which flew

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out. Then, reading slowly: "For derlivery: von longue gase and dwo dall ubright gase. Vragile; mit great gare. Gonsign vrom Vienna."

"Oh!" said the housekeeper, shortly, and then in a sharper tone, which sounded as if garnished with suspicion, "and how much to pay?"

"Do bay?" said the man, looking over his glasses and wrinkling his forehead. "Noding. Garriage, Gondinental sdeamer, and vrom Volkestone to London, all baid."

"Ho! I have had no orders about receiving any packages. What have you brought?"

"Der dree gase, mattam."

"Yes, yes; but what is in them?"

"Ach! In de longue gase a bianovorty, very olt. Id is in von of our gase. Der von id game in vas broke all do bids in de sdeamer."

"Then it is damaged," said the housekeeper, shortly. "I shall not receive it."

"Nein, nein, mattam. Der biano is nod damage. Id is de gase vos broke. I shall unback id vor you do see. My beobles gif orders. Id is all right. You look here; id is insure, mattam."

He pointed to a printed note at the bottom of the consignment leaf, which the housekeeper read, and then seemed satisfied.

"Well, I suppose you had better leave them," she said.

The man gave his head a clumsy bob, intended, no doubt, for a polite bow, before tearing off from the counterfoil a duly filled-up delivery-note, which he handed to the housekeeper, with the pencil.

"B'r'aps mattam will sign," he said, and he stepped inside the hall to lay the open book ready for the receiver's signature.—"Dank you, mattam. Now where will you have de backages?"

"Bring them in here," was the reply.

"Ach! Zo? Bud dey dake up all de room."

"Never mind. Let me see."

The man nodded, buttoned up his book, and took out a key, which he shook significantly.

"We dake gare of de goods in our sharge," he said, and going out he gave some orders to the waiting men, who let down a couple of bars which crossed the back of the van, after which the foreman, or whatever he was, unlocked the doors, which were thrown open, and his people, with all the dexterity of those accustomed to handle chests and pieces of furniture, drew out a long deal case, getting it well between them, and bore it up into the hall, to place it where directed at the foot of a wide flight of stairs.

"As if he hadn't got enough pianos in the place!" muttered the housekeeper as the men tramped out again, followed by their foreman, who gave his orders in a short, stern voice to the pair, who entered the van, and between them turned down a tall, heavy case till the top could be taken by the two waiting by the tail-board, who supported it till the first pair got out of the waggon and lent their help, with the result that the four skilfully bore what was evidently a very heavy load into the hall, and then, in obedience to their orders, stood the case up on end.

The third case was brought in after the same fashion, and stood on the other side of the piano.

"Is that all?" asked the housekeeper.

"Yes, mattam, dat is everydings; but I mus' dake de insdrument out of our gase."

He turned sharply to one of his followers, and said, in German, "Where are the tools?" and the man went out to the van.

The housekeeper looked at the three cases pretty well blocking up the end of the hall, and then, as if making up her mind quickly and mastering a doubt, she said, imperiously:—

"I shall not have the case opened."

The foreman looked perplexed, and began to pass one hand through his beard.

"I am sorry, mattam, but my orders were to open dot gase and see dat der biano was in goot orter and none of der bolish gone off. Ach! Besides, I must dake back de emdy gase."

"Very well," said the housekeeper; "but the things can't stand there. Your men must carry them up into one of the rooms."

"Zo?" exclaimed the man, and, getting the porters together, he turned an inquiring look upon the housekeeper.

"Through that door at the head of that staircase."

"Ach! Dot is goot," said the man, with a little chuckle. "Blenty of room; all strade oop, and no gorners to go rount. Dese gases are very heavy, mattam. Now, my boys," he added, in German, "be quick."

It was an ascent of some eight or nine low, wide stairs to a big landing, where an arched doorway was partly hidden by heavy curtains, which in their turn were covered with holland. These were thrown back on either side with a loud jangling noise of brass rings gliding over a pole, showing a

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long gallery lit from the roof, and looking like a kind of avenue of awkward objects draped in holland, while as much of the walls as could be seen was evidently hung with pictures similarly treated.



"THE FOREMAN LOOKED PERPLEXED."

"You shoost dell me where you like de gase to stand, and my poys shall roll oop enough garped, don't you dink?"

"Yes, it will be as well," said the housekeeper, leading the way, followed by the men, who directly after folded back four-fold a portion of the magnificent Aubusson carpet.

"Dot will do," said the foreman, in a deep growl. "Dere is blenty of room, mattam," and then in German he pointed out where each case was to be placed.

Everything was done in so quick and business-like a way that the housekeeper almost smiled as she stood looking on from the landing, and saw the men in the hall take hold of one of the tall cases, tilting it towards her, and handling it easily in spite of its weight. One minute she noted the inscription "Top," in three languages, the next she saw three of the men lower the case down to the fourth, who had gone upon all fours at the foot of the stairs ready to receive the weight upon his broad back, and while his companions guided, eased, and steadied the burden, he crawled slowly up the stairs to the landing, where the case was up-ended, seized, and borne to its apportioned place.

"Dot is de best way to garry heffy gases, mattam," said the foreman, with a grim smile.

The fellow-package was treated in the same way and stood up facing the first, so that they looked like two square deal towers right and left of the holland avenue, and then the men went down to attack the piano-case.

"Some stadues, mattam, I dink," said the foreman.

"Are they quite safe like that?"

"Zo? Ach, you dink dey dumble over. Nein, nein. Doo heffy. You look dere."

As he spoke the man seized one of the tall cases and gave it a heavy thrust; but it did not stir.

"You zee," he said, "I gould not move them. My poys are fery sdrong. Look now."

He pointed to the piano-case coming up on four legs, as it were, balanced carefully on the back of another of the men; and a minute later it was placed between the others.

"Dools," said the foreman, and a couple of screw-drivers were produced from a carpet-bag, the lid of the case taken off, the front unscrewed in turn, and then the men drew

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out a beautifully inlaid early representation of a square piano, harpsichord, or clavichord, probably a couple of hundred years old. Its legs lay at one end of the case, and these were taken out, screwed in their places, and the instrument stood up, with the foreman carefully examining it all round, while three of the men replaced front and lid of the case and bore it back to the van.

"She is not efen sgratched," said the foreman, with a sigh of relief, and he tapped the top with his knuckles, bringing forth a discordant, jangling sound of loose wires.

"I not gif much for dot music, mattam," said the man, with a thick chuckle; "but dis engrafe wood—ach, lofely!"

"Old rubbish," said the housekeeper, shortly.

"Dot is what my old woman would say, mattam. But engrafe inlay wood! Ach, lofely! Your Jippingtale gome not near to it. Now, you!" he continued, to the remaining man, and the next minute the latter was busy with spirit-bottle and rubbers, touching up the old polished wood where necessary, and vastly improving the appearance of the instrument as he brought out the grain, while the foreman opened the front and displayed the worn and yellow ivory keys and the satin-wood lining decked with inlaid flowers.

"Mattam like do dry de biano?" said the foreman, with a leer at the stern-looking housekeeper. "Nein? Mattam is right," he continued, thumping two or three keys and producing dismal, skeleton-like sounds. "Ach!" he said, grimly. "Like an old goffin in which zome old music was buried, and we dig it oop."

"Bah!" exclaimed the housekeeper. "There, be quick, please."

"My poy have nearly done, mattam. You like to look inside again at de vlowers all inlaid in wood?"

"No," said the housekeeper; "I have no taste for such old rubbish."

"Mattam is fery wise laty," said the man; "boot dere are voolish beobles who give one, dwo, dree hoondert bound for dot. Dere, I shut him oop. Dot will do, Hans, poy; de bolish is goot."

The man replaced his bottle and rubbers along with the screwdrivers in the carpet-bag, and went to join his companions, who were shutting up the van.



"A JUG OF BEER WAS PARTAKEN OF IN THE HALL."

"Dot is all, mattam," said the foreman.

The reiterated "mattam," joined with the respect paid to her, mollified Mrs. Dunby, who approved more of the German polish than the French just applied to the old instrument, and she became condescending.

"You and your men would like some beer, I suppose?" she said, tartly.

"Doze dings was fery heffy, mattam, and my poys are Sharman. Dey vould be glad to trink your healt."

"Then you do not drink beer, but schnapps, I suppose?" said the housekeeper, with a smile.

"Nein, mattam, nod at all. I haf been deedodal effer since I gome to London."

"Oh!" said the housekeeper, and she sent one of the maids for a jug of beer, which was partaken of in the hall, and then after a "Goot morning, mattam," the foreman took his departure and the van was driven away, its gilt letters enlightening all whom it might concern upon the fact that Hoffmann Frères, of Paris, Berlin, and London, had delivered a heavy consignment of bric-à-brac at Ehrenberg's, and that was all.

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II.

THE maids said that Mrs. Dunby was in one of her tantrums next morning; and, in truth, that lady was not in an amiable state of mind. It was quite natural that Mr. Berry, the butler, had not returned from Brighton overnight, for it had been settled that he should pass four-and-twenty hours at the seaside; but that Rimmer and Small, upon whom she looked with favour, should have taken advantage of her kindness and, in the absence of master and fellow-servant, stopped out all night too, was unpardonable, and she said so in the hearing of the maids, and, in addition, uttered threats about reporting their conduct to Mr. Ehrenberg on his return.

"Which she just won't," said one of the housemaids; "but fleas in their ears when they do come back is nothing to it."

"My word, yes!" said another. "There will be a shindy!"

The said "shindy" occurred much sooner than the maids anticipated, for they had hardly spoken before there was a violent ringing of a bell.

"What bell's that?" said one.

"Picture-gallery," said the cook, who never answered bells, but had a very good ear for music. "You gells have been leaving your brushes and brooms there after sweeping up yesterday when the men went away."

"I didn't," said one housemaid.

"And I'll swear I didn't," said the other.

Jangle went the bell again, more violently than before.

"Why don't you answer the bell, Mary?" said the first speaker.

"Well, I'm sure, Sarah!" replied the other, tartly. "It's not my place to answer the picture-gallery bells. Where are the footmen?"

Jangle went the tintinnabulation again, and cook spoke wisdom.

"She's in a regular fantigue, my dears, and I'd go up together and share it, if I was you. There, don't stand haggling."

Cook had great influence with her fellow-servants, and her advice prevailed, the two housemaids entering by the open picture-gallery door just as Mrs. Dunby had placed her hand upon the bell handle with the intention of keeping it there till the summons was answered.

"Oh, there you are at last!" cried the irate housekeeper. "Now, then, if you please, have the goodness to explain that."

She stood in a tragedy-queen attitude, pointing at a holland-covered chiffonnier, upon which stood a port-wine bottle and a tumbler, the first empty and displaying its patch of whitewash, and beside it, impaled upon a pocket corkscrew, a dissipated-looking, sodden cork, the glass holding still about a tea-spoonful of port-wine crust, showing that the bottle had been drained.

The maids stared at the bottle and glass and then back at the housekeeper, before turning questioning eyes one upon the other.

"Well, why don't you speak?" cried their questioner.

"I dunno what you mean, ma'am," cried Mary.

"And I'm sure I don't neither," said Sarah.

"No lies, if you please," cried the housekeeper, angrily. "If you'll take my advice you'll be open and confess."

"Confess!" said Mary. "I've nothing to confess."

"And I'm sure I ain't," said Sarah.

"Shame upon you both! I've suspected it for long enough. Late at night, too, after I had gone up to bed!"

"What do you mean, Mrs. Dunby?" said Mary, simply.

"I mean that you two took advantage of Mr. Berry being out and the men-servants away to go down to the butler's pantry and steal that wine."

"That I'm sure we didn't," snorted Mary. "Nothing of the kind."

"It's false!" cried the housekeeper. "You two planned it, I'm sure, and had in I don't know who—the grocer's man or the butcher, or some other two friends of yours—to drink your master's wine; and as soon as he returns you may make up both your minds to be turned away without characters."

"Oh, very well," said Mary, loftily. "Don't mind what she says, Sarah, dear; good places are plentiful enough, and it won't be much of a loss to leave a situation where the housekeeper drinks."

"What?" cried the lady in question, turning pale.

"And has in a German furniture-moving man to half finish a bottle of master's port wine."

"How dare you!"

"And has so much herself that she forgets to put the bottle and glass away."

"You impudent hussy!" cried the housekeeper, almost foaming.

"Faugh! I saw you smiling at him yesterday, and him being sweet as sweet to you. Didn't you, Sarah?"

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"Well, I did see something, certingly," said Sarah; "and——"

"If you please, Mrs. Dunby," said cook, entering the gallery, looking sharply from one to the other, "the front-door bell rang, and here's that German furniture-moving man come back."

The two housemaids burst into a shriek of laughter and rushed out of the room, while

"Hoffmann Frères—Despatch, London. A mistake. The three cases not to be taken to my London house, but sent by S.W.R. to The Willows, Dalemond-on-Thames."

"Ha!" said the housekeeper, coldly. "But the cases are here."

"Yes, mattam."

"Then what do you propose to do?"

"What dis delegram say, mattam."



"HERE'S THAT GERMAN FURNITURE-MOVING MAN COME BACK."

the housekeeper's face became of the colour of fresh putty.

"Anything the matter, Mrs. Dunby?" said the cook.

"The matter? Oh!" cried the housekeeper.

Few words, but intense of the intensest, and she stalked into the hall, to find the foreman from Hoffmann Frères waiting, hat in hand, just inside the door.

"Goot morning, mattam," he said, with a respectful bow. "I am zorry to drouble you, but there is a great misdake."

"And pray who has made it?" said the housekeeper, icily, and with tightened lips.

"I subbose, mattam, it was de Herr Ehrenberg."

"My master?"

"Yes, mattam. If you would read dot delegram."

He placed the message in her hands, and she read:—

"Take them to Mr. Ehrenberg's country seat?"

"No, mattam. I haf brought de van and de gase, and we shall dake all de dings to Nine Elms."

Mrs. Dunby looked very cold and stern, but her heart seemed to be on fire and burning with the unjust injuries she had received, as she read the telegram over again.

"Very well," she said, coldly; "I suppose it is all right. Make haste, please, for I am busy."

"I dank you, mattam," said the foreman; and he went slowly to the door, which was opened for him, to sign to the waiting men with the van, who immediately began to open the back of the great, lumbering vehicle and draw out the empty case.

"I am fery zorry do drouble you all over again, mattam," said the foreman, politely.

"Never mind," replied the housekeeper, coldly; and then she stood on guard, as

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in duty bound, while the business of the previous day was reversed. She saw the heavy packages removed and the piano restored to its outer case, and neither of the statues could have been so stony as the aspect of Mrs. Dunby and her distance of manner towards the foreman, while when the two housemaids passed through the long gallery twice over—casually, of course—there was a flash from the housekeeper's usually dull eyes that was absolutely withering.

The moving took some time, for the men were very deliberate in their motions, and their foreman punctilious in the extreme over the relaying of the rolled-back carpet, and the filling up and signing of a printed form of receipt.

But at last all was done, the cases were in the van, locked up, the men in their seats upon the lowered tail-board, and the foreman by the driver, ready to raise his hat to the housekeeper as the party were driven away.

"Ha!" said Mrs. Dunby just then, with a snort, as she caught sight of two tall, picked footmen out of livery coming down the side of the square. "There's going to be something said about this."

Prophetic words. Ten minutes later Rimmer's ears tingled, and Small, in despite of his 6ft., felt worthy of his name.

"Old cat!" he said to his fellow-servant, later on. "I thought we'd pretty well got the length of her foot. Think she'll tell the gov'nor when he comes back?"

"You bet!" was the surly reply.

The week which followed was not pleasant for anybody; even Mr. Berry, the butler, did not seem benefited by his run down to Brighton, and the general consensus of opinion in the servants' hall was that matters would be made warm when "master" returned.

They were, and much sooner than was anticipated. For three days after there was a surprise—Ehrenberg came home in a cab, no notice having been sent so that the carriage might meet him and his lady; and consequently no preparations had been made. The shutters were still closed and the furniture remained decked in holland.

"Been awful," whispered Mrs. Ehrenberg's maid hastily to the housekeeper. "Nothing the matter, but she's pretended that she was getting worse, and he was obliged to bring her home."

There was nothing for it but for all the staff to set to work to make the place presentable for the travellers, and as soon as Ehrenberg had finished the scratch dinner and was sitting over his wine alone he sent for the housekeeper.

"Well, Dunby," he said, "is everything right?"

"Well, sir——"

"Stop!" cried the great collector, excitedly. "Don't tell me there has been a burglary amongst my gems?"

"Oh, dear, no, sir. Everything in the collection is all right. I was going to allude to the conduct of the servants during your absence."

"Is that all?" said Ehrenberg, calmly.

"Yes, sir; but it's very serious, sir, and I feel it my duty to speak."

"Go on, then, and get it over. You know I don't like to be bothered about these petty domestic troubles."

"Yes, sir, but this is very serious. I came down one morning, sir, to find that two of the women had been having visitors in the night, and there were traces of their carousing in the picture-gallery."

"What traces?" said Ehrenberg, glaring.

"An empty port-wine bottle, sir, and glass."

"In my gallery?"

"Yes, sir."

"Confound their insolence! But port wine? In the night? Where were the men? Were they in it?"

"No, sir; I am grieved to say that they had taken advantage of your absence and were out all night."

"Discharge the lot. A fresh staff of domestics, Mrs Dunby. With such a collection of art treasures as mine I must have servants that I can trust."

"Yes, sir. I am sorry to complain, but the maids were most insolent to me."

"Then speak out when you are applied to for their characters."

"Yes, sir."

"That's all, then?"

"Yes, sir; I don't think that I have anything else to say."

"Then be off and let me finish my wine in peace, for I've had precious little since I've been away."

"I'm very sorry, sir. My mistress, then, has been so ill?"

"Rubbish! There, that will do."

"Oh, there is one thing, sir. The three great cases arrived from Vienna."

"The three great cases?'

"Yes, sir; by Hoffmann Frères; and I had them placed in the picture-gallery."

"Three great cases!" mused Ehrenberg. "And you had them placed in the gallery?"

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"Yes, sir; but the men came with your telegram saying that it was a mistake."

"Ah, of course!" cried Ehrenberg. "I felt that there was nothing to come here."

"Exactly, sir, and they took them away next day."

"Took them away next day?" said the collector, changing colour. "My telegram? Good heavens, woman! I sent no telegram. Where is it?"

"Here, sir," said the housekeeper, trembling, and she produced the delivery-note, the receipt for the packages, and the telegram, all neatly pinned together.

Ehrenberg glanced at them and thumped his fist on the table.

"A conspiracy!" he roared. "Woman, do you mean to tell me you received these three great cases and had them placed in the picture-gallery?"

"Yes, sir."

"And they were there all one night?"

"Yes, sir; I'm——"

"Silence!" roared Ehrenberg. "And they were fetched next day?"

"Yes, sir."

"What were they?"

"Statues, sir, in two cases, and a piano in the other."

"How do you know?"

"They opened the case and took the piano out."



"MY VELASQUEZ—WORTH THOUSANDS!"

"'A pianner, Sammy!'" groaned Ehrenberg, involuntarily quoting old Weller's words to his son. "Oh, woman, woman, you've ruined me!"

He upset his wine and ran out into the hall, bounded up the short flight of stairs, threw open the gallery door, and switched on the electric lights, to reveal a state of peace within, for the holland draperies met his eyes from end to end, and as the trembling housekeeper tottered in he dropped down upon a covered settee and began to mop his streaming forehead.

"A false alarm, Dunby," he said, huskily. "I was afraid that—I thought—I don't understand—yes, I do!" he roared, springing up and rushing to the nearest portion of the wall, to seize and whisk aside the hanging holland covering of a picture. "I knew it! I knew it!" he cried, piteously, as an empty massive gilt frame met his eyes. "My Velasquez — worth thousands!"

He went to the next drapery and dragged it aside.

"That heavenly Rubens!" he cried, and rushed on.

"My Guido!" he groaned.

Before another:—

"That glorious Vandyke!"

Then there was a yell of rage before the empty frame of a Botticelli, another where a Murillo should have been seen, and so on, and so on — everywhere a sharp knife had been in use, and the choice reputed works of the great artists had been neatly cut out and were gone.

"Get out of my sight before I murder you!" cried the collector, at last.—"No, stop!"

"Yes, sir. Oh, Mr. Ehrenberg, sir——"

"Don't talk to me! I'm a ruined man. Here, quick; send for the police!"

"Yes, sir," cried the woman, making for the door, glad to escape.

"Not the regular force.—Here, what am I saying? Send Berry in a cab, and tell him he's to bring back the sharpest sergeant from Scotland Yard."

The message was sent, and Ehrenberg calmed down over his wine, which he had finished and was well through a choice cigar before the lynx-eyed detective from the

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Metropolitan centre arrived, had a short conference with the collector, and then went over the place, saw the empty frames, and heard all that Mrs. Dunby had to say before being closeted in the study once more.

"Well, sergeant," said Ehrenberg, "what do you think of it all?"

"The same as you do, sir," was the reply.

"What do you mean, sir," cried Ehrenberg, stiffly.

"Why, it's all plain enough, sir. Whoever planned the job must have known of you and your doings quite well."

"Then you think it was the servants?"

"Tchah! Not they, sir! Not in 'em. Bit of artful craft, sir, planned by someone with brains and a bit o' capital to carry it out. There was the van painted and got up for the job; the old piano they brought; the way it was all rehearsed like a play beforehand. I should say, sir, that this scheme was made in Germany. Those Dutchmen have been pretty busy here lately, and the pictures have gone there to be sold."

"But the servants must have had something to do with it. Letting them in, for instance, that night."

"The housekeeper did that by day, sir."

"What do you mean?"

"Why, don't you see, sir? Those tall cases with the two statues in — live statues, sir, shut up ready to be let out."

"Who by?"

"The little wiry chap in the old piano, sir. Sure to be a wiry one come out of that, sir. That sounding-board was like the lid —on hinges, sir. He only had to lift it up and step out to open the tops of the two tall cases to let out his mates. Then they had it all to themselves. Sharp knives passed round the frames, pictures rolled up and tied with string. Plenty of room for the rolls in the corners of the cases, and in the piano, too. The job done, the two stepped into their places again and the third shut them up—locked 'em in, I dare say—and then went to bed in his piano to wait until called for. Beg pardon, sir, but it's all as plain as the nose on your face."

"Yes," said Ehrenberg, bitterly, as he involuntarily raised his hand to the rather prominent organ. "And now what do you mean to do?"

"Nothing, sir, but wait. The only thing I can suggest is to watch the sales if the pictures come to the hammer in Paris, Berlin, Vienna, or elsewhere; and all I can say as to that, sir, would be—is it worth while?"

Ehrenberg sat looking hard at the officer for some minutes, during which he ran over in his own mind the trifling sums he had paid for the different *chefs d'œuvre* of the great masters, and decided that the man was right.



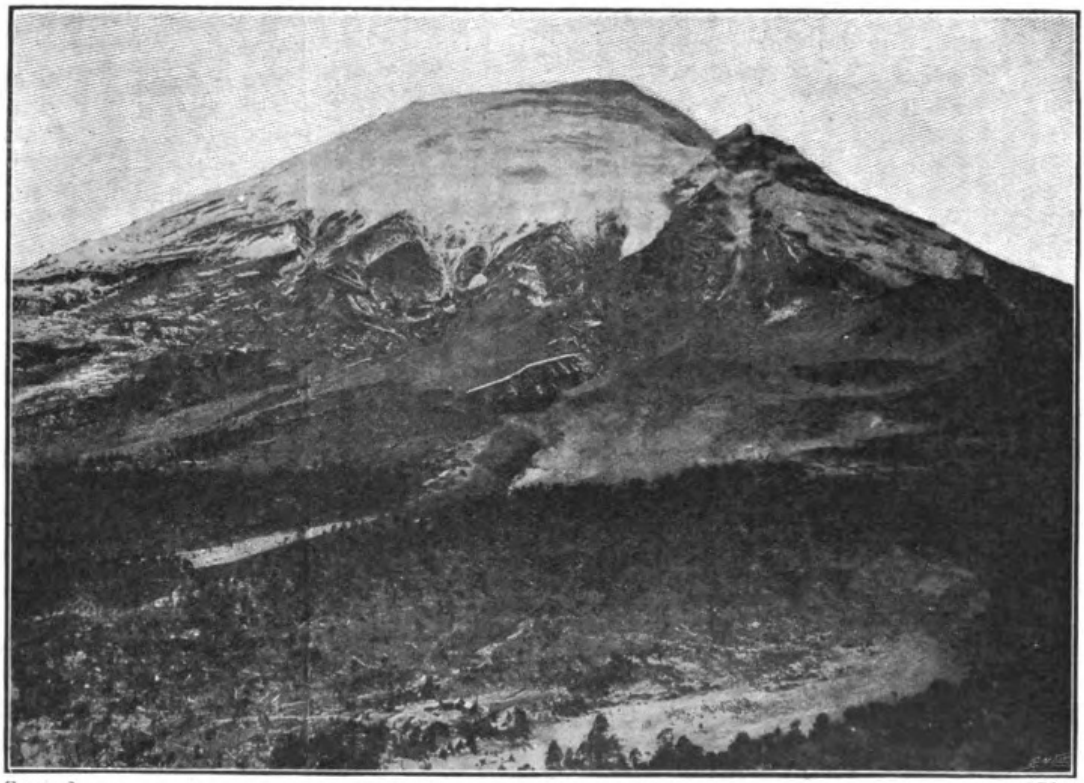
"EHRENBERG SAT LOOKING HARD AT THE OFFICER.

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A Night in the Crater of a Volcano.

By Mrs. Alec-Tweedie.

Author of "Mexico as I Saw It," "Through Finland in Carts," etc.



From a] A GENERAL VIEW OF POPOCATAPETL. [*Photo.*

ONE of the most famous volcanoes of the world stands in the great plain of Mexico; it is over 17,000ft. high, and rises into a sugar-loaf point of snow. Far away in the more southern and tropical parts of the Republic Popocatapetl may be seen rearing his majestic head. It is possible to go to the summit, but not easy. Having done a little mountain climbing invariably makes one anxious to do more, so I quite hoped before leaving Mexico to accomplish the ascent of this famous giant. After many travels in many lands I feel that the view from the Castle of Chapultepec, formerly the stronghold of Montezuma, near Mexico City, is the grandest panorama my eyes have ever beheld; the castle is only 8,000ft. above the sea, so that, presumably, the view from the summit of one of the two famous volcanoes across the valley must be still more wonderful.

Amecameca is one of the quaint old Spanish towns of the Mexican Republic, and a run of a few hours along the Inter-Oceanic Railway brings travellers to this the nearest point for ascending Popocatapetl. What a dear old town it is!

My stay in the Republic was drawing to a close, the notes for my book were nearly completed, and there remained but two expeditions to make, when, unfortunately, one of those disasters to which one is liable in the tropics befell me. I was bitten by mosquitoes or poisoned by ivy—it matters not which—blood-poisoning was the result, and a terrible illness nearly claimed my bones to be left in that far-away land. Those expeditions, therefore, were never made, and Popocatapetl, so far as I am concerned, yet remains a *terra incognita*.

"I am extremely glad you couldn't go," remarked Mr. J. Fletcher Toomer, an English engineer well known in Mexico, where he lived for many years in charge of the great drainage tunnel which finds its outlet by passing through the mountain range surrounding the City of Mexico. I had so often been warned about the difficulties of Popocatapetl that I scornfully replied to this manager of mines and railways:—

"Well, I had quite meant to go, it was part of my programme, and had I been able to crawl it would have been done."

"Crawling about suits that height," he said, laughingly, "for verily it amounts to that. It is a tremendous undertaking for anyone, and I know it was nearly my death. But

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then I spent a night in the bowels of the earth."

"How?" I asked, in amazement.

"Well, it came about in this wise. There was some idea of working the sulphur in the bottom of the crater, bits of which had been brought up at different times by the Mexican Indians in a primitive way, and I was asked if I dared go down and make an investigation into the possibility of working the mine for practical business purposes."

"Had no one been down before?" I inquired.

"No white man so far as I know, and I don't suppose another is likely to go in a hurry, leastways to spend the night there, for it was not a pleasant experience."

"We started from Amecameca very early in the morning," said Mr. Toomer. "Of course, there was the usual delay with the Indian guides; the horses were not ready, the food was not prepared, and it was long past the appointed time before our little party was under way. At last we were all mounted and off for a ride of some hours, which ended in gradually ascending the mountain itself. Ten thousand feet above the sea we emerged beyond the timber-line, and in a little while reached a ranch called Tlacamas. It was a primitive enough little place, where there was a small sulphur refinery used for the product brought down the mountain by the Indians. This little hut was to be our night's shelter,



From a] THE ASCENT OF THE MOUNTAIN. *[Photo.*

From the south-east side, be it understood, the crater is accessible, but the height is so great, the climate so warm from which one ascends, and the air so rarefied that mountain sickness makes it impossible for many people, otherwise good climbers, to ascend this lofty peak; indeed, several of the cities of Mexico stand nearly 8,000ft. above the sea, and many folk cannot live even at such an altitude. After suffering a stifling sensation for an hour or two they have to return to the train and descend to the plains below.

It is a curious thing in Mexico, as in other tropical countries, that everything looks so near. The air is so clear, the sky so blue, that when standing in Amecameca I thought the giant peak was only a mile or two away; it seemed just beside me, so to speak, but in reality it was nothing of the kind.

and we slept amidst the fumes of sulphur, noticing that the very ferns and flowers could be thickly coated with the mineral after being dipped into the molten sulphur. It was only about five o'clock in the afternoon when we reached this spot, but when we asked our guide what programme he suggested his reply was that 'if the señor ate nothing after a little light five o'clock supper and did exactly as he was told he would reach the top to-morrow.' It sounded an easy programme, but we were hungry after a long, dusty ride and wanted a good meal; nevertheless, feeling that the man knew best, we implicitly obeyed his orders. We soon turned in, rolled ourselves up in our blankets, and slept on the floor quite happily.

"At half-past two the following morning, with the darkest of blue skies overhead and

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twinkling stars high up in the heavens, we rose, but we were not allowed to eat or drink ere proceeding on our way."

This to the stranger sounds unkind, but it is a curious fact that at such high altitudes one is rarely anxious for food, and I know that during the months I spent in Mexico I seldom felt the pangs of hunger, and was content with far less sleep than usual. The air acts like champagne, and, although very invigorating and delightful for a time, it tells in the end upon the constitution, and makes living in such altitudes difficult and dangerous to people not brought up from their youth to doing so.

"No boots," called the guide to Mr. Toomer, as he was completing his toilet; "no boots, señor. Your feet must be wrapped in strips of heavy flannel."



THE HUT ON THE MOUNTAIN.
From a Photo.

Suiting the action to the word, the swarthy Indian proceeded to bind his companion up until his feet looked exactly like sacked hams, outside which he placed native "guaraches," the sandals of the country. These shoes are made of a piece of raw hide cut flat and more or less the shape of the foot, and a few thongs of leather across the toes and round the heel bind them on. The natives never wear anything else than these sandals; sometimes they are ornamented with brown or white leather alternating across the toe in chess-board fashion, but they are more often plain, for the Mexican Indian is generally poor. He finds his sandals sufficient protection for his feet, as a rule, and many of the men of different tribes will jog-trot fifty miles a day with ease. They take letters and carry weights on their heads, are general carriers in fact, and, in spite of the heat, can endure great fatigue.

For ascending a mountain strips of flannel are fastened outside the sandal, however, to prevent the traveller from slipping.

How well I know those wound-up feet! When mountaineering in Switzerland or snow-shoeing in Norway the ordinary boot with a high heel is an impossibility, and the well-protected swathed foot is as necessary in the tropics as in the Arctic zone.

"Three hours' ride," continued Mr. Toomer, "through that deep sand so common in Mexico brought us to Las Cruces, which is not even a hut, but merely a rock beyond which point it is impossible for ponies to climb. The stars had disappeared, the deep indigo had turned to lighter blue, and the heat of the sun was already being felt in the valley below, but with us it was only pleasantly warm.

"'Walk very slowly,' said the guide; 'the señor must walk more slowly than he ever walked in all his life before, or the señor's heart will stop and he will not reach the top.'

"Not wishing the señor's heart to stop I took his advice, which was quite superfluous, for I quickly found that it would be impossible to walk at anything but a slow pace, to crawl in fact, stopping every few minutes to look at the view below. What a glorious panorama lay mapped out before us, making an excellent excuse for turning round to admire it constantly! For two hours we trudged along, getting up higher and higher, until we left the sand behind and found ourselves in the region of perpetual snow.

"'The señor must not go so quick,' exclaimed the Indian, buttoning his white shirt at the neck and pulling his blanket and red flannel zerape about him; 'the señor must stop again and look at the view,' and so I halted. He was right; the view was worth stopping for many times just to look at it. There were the shining domes of the City of Mexico far away in the distance, and below us lay the quaint old town of Amecameca. I felt that a little refreshment would be acceptable after the climb, but the head guide was quite determined that I should neither eat nor drink until the work was done.

"It seemed suddenly to grow cold,

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although the sun had been shining a moment before. Like a pantomime scene a sudden haziness surrounded us, a chill ran through me, the shining domes of the city disappeared, it grew perceptibly colder, even Amecameca became indistinct, and then in a moment, as if some magic wand waved around us, we were in a blinding blizzard of snow. How it snowed! How cold it was! We waited for the furies to spend themselves; half an hour, and it seemed to get worse—an hour, and the guide declared it was impossible to proceed. This was not cheerful when we had come so far, but there was nothing for it but to turn and go back again to the little ranch at Tlacamas and spend the night there, he said."

Those who have done any mountaineering will sympathize with the enterprising engineer, who, after all his struggles with elevation and climate, had to turn back.

On their return to the hut the stern guide allowed them to partake of much-needed refreshment, which they thoroughly enjoyed. The next morning they were up quite as early as on the preceding day, and as the weather seemed more propitious they started on their way; but they got very little farther than on their first attempt, before they were overtaken by another blizzard and were again cruelly forced to return to the rough little hut. The third day, unfortunately, did not bring better luck, for the snow was descending in masses at the hour appointed for the start, and consequently they never left their primitive quarters at all.

It must have been very annoying, heart-breaking almost, to make two attempts and wait a third day in idleness, but these are the sort of drawbacks that happen to travellers. In Mexico it is not so bad as elsewhere, as the native Indians are the most interesting people. They believe in witches and devils, have the quaintest ideas about evil spirits and many other subjects, and to a man like Mr. Toomer, who is an excellent Spanish scholar as well as an interested traveller, they open out and do their best to amuse. The different tribes speak various languages of their own, but Spanish being the language of civilized society, many of the Indians are able to converse in that tongue. So, although it sounds dull to be shut up in a room 15ft. by 10ft. with half-a-dozen natives for several days, while storm raged without, Mr. Toomer, no doubt, had quite an interesting time.

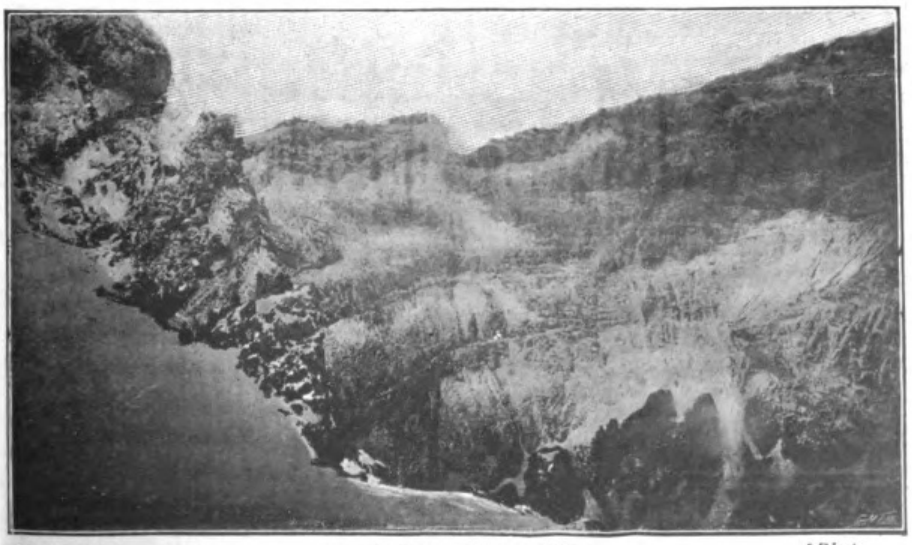
Happily, luck attended the party on the fifth day, and they reached the top in safety.

The famous volcano of Popocatapetl raises its proud head nearly 18,000ft. above the sea, and the crater is 1,575ft. in diameter, and supposed to be something like 1,300ft. deep. Figures give but a poor idea of size to the uninitiated; suffice it to say that the basin is of enormous dimensions.

"What did it look like when you stood at the top?" I asked the adventurous traveller.

"From the edge on which we stood we peered down some 300ft., forming a sheer precipice of basalt rock, at the bottom of which there was a ledge 3ft. or 4ft. wide running round part of the basin. From there the *débris* of ages had rolled continuously down the crater until it had filled it up into a funnel shape, leaving its sides at an angle of about forty-five degrees. All this rock and scoria, the snow and ice of thousands of years, had frozen, for to all practical purposes the volcano is extinct; that is to say, there have been no eruptions for centuries, although smoke and steam and bubbling fire continue, and have been more noticeable since the eruption at Martinique.

"At the mouth of the crater stood an old windlass or winch, a very crude sort of



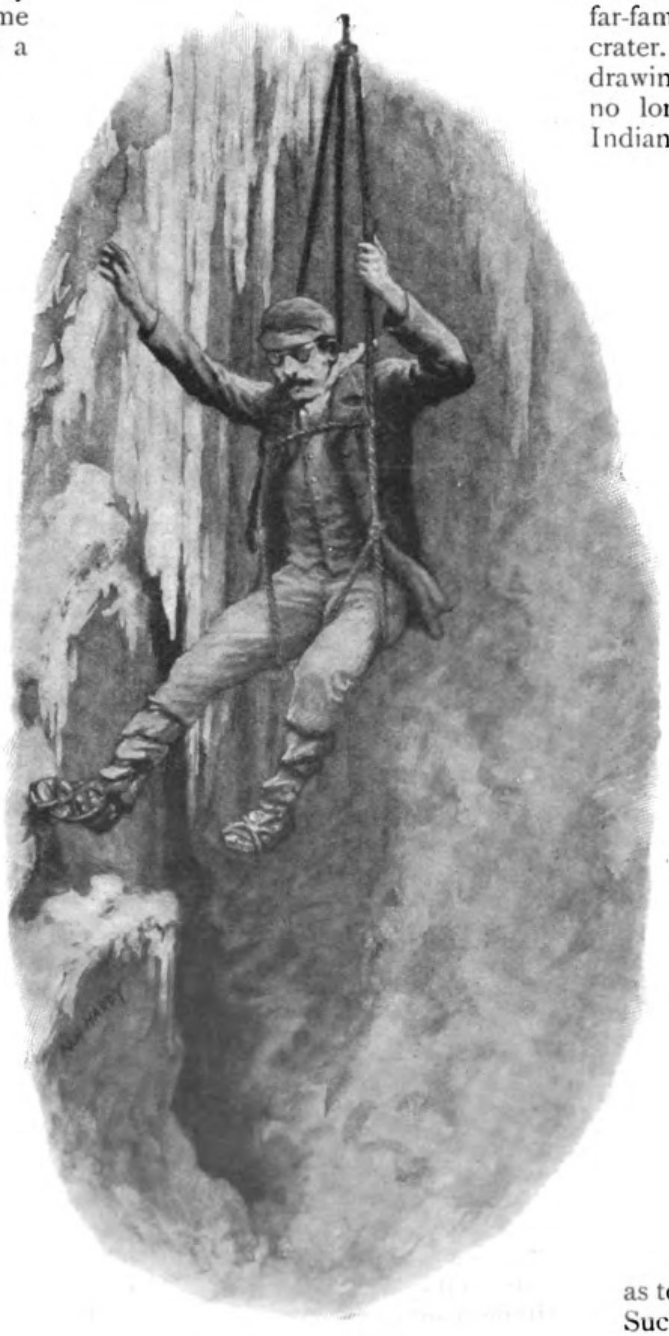
From a] THE MOUTH OF THE CRATER. *[Photo.*

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arrangement, erected by the Indians for the purpose of letting down their most daring friends to fetch the raw sulphur.

"Hanging from the windlass was an old rope, made of native fibre; the whole concern was extremely dilapidated in appearance, and the rope did not look particularly strong, but as there was no other means of reaching the bottom I had to trust myself to it and make the venture. The Indians placed a sort of sling round my body, under my arms, and round my thighs, in which I sat, and then, telling me to swing myself out into space, they proceeded to let me down. It was a curious sensation. The squeaks of that old windlass above were echoed in the cavernous depth of the crater. I dangled in the air and swayed from side to side, bumping now and again against gigantic icicles, and only preventing injuries by kicking out with my feet or a push with my hands.

"What an awful distance it looked below! There was nearly 1,000ft. of cavern beneath me over which I was swinging. Down, down, down I went until the men and the windlass above became mere specks, the air seemed to grow warmer, and I almost wished I had never come.



"I DANGLED IN THE AIR."

Then my feet touched the rocky ledge and I could stand again. I was quickly joined by the two Indians who were to continue the journey with me, the rest of the party remaining above. They were armed with picks and hatchets, and at once proceeded to cut steps in the frozen snow to enable us to reach the bottom of the crater. I suppose they must have made about a thousand of those steps, which I scrambled along after them as soon as there was foothold.

"By the time we reached the bottom it was about three o'clock, so I had time for three hours' investigation of the far-famed deposits of the crater. Night was now drawing on, and we could no longer see the other Indians, who had retired to the edge of the crater before they started back to a place of shelter for the night. They were to return to fetch us and wind us up in the morning."

What an extraordinary position for an Englishman to be in! He was to spend the night alone with two swarthy descendants of the Aztec race — of which there are still half a million representatives in Mexico — down, far away down in the interior of the earth! The Indians had been there before, but had never dreamed of doing anything so weird as to pass a night below. Such a performance as that appeared to them

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madness, and was only shared by them after considerable bribery. The Mexican Indian, however, will do a good deal for the dollars with which he can procure pulque—the native drink—or gamble. He is a kindly soul unless fired by drink, and then he can become a veritable fiend. Never, never have I seen people so excitedly drunk as in Mexico, where the milk of the maguey plant seems to fire their brains and distort their fancies.

It must have been a creepy sort of experience to roll up in a blanket and prepare to rest, especially as the Indians had arranged to stay reluctantly, and were consequently not in the best of tempers. It must have been horribly weird with each hour of the darkening night to watch the blow-holes of fire and flame grow brighter, to peer into the darkness around, the black inky distance, to listen to the hissing fire and watch the flickering flames throwing strange shadows. There are several of these blow-holes of spouting fire, and, as Mr. Toomer remarked :—

"Their pulsating pouf, pouf, pouf sounded like the heavy breathing of some prehistoric monster, whose breath, sulphurous and yellow, faded away in dim clouds of mist above the blazing caldron. It was easy to conjure up all sorts of weird things in that strange spot. Now and then we heard a rumble or a crash as some great boulder or block rolled down the sides of the crater and found its last resting-place in the cone-like bottom where we sat. One of these would have been our death had we not sought protection beneath two gigantic crags which stand in the middle of the basin."

"How dared you sleep?" I asked.

"Sleep? One could hardly sleep much, in spite of fatigue, in such surroundings; the sulphur was too strong for that. Every moment it seemed to become stronger, and my lungs laboured more and more against the fumes. It was horribly cold, and yet when standing near the blow-holes the heat was tremendous; besides, the fumes of the sulphur were almost insupportable. One seemed to be peering into the infernal regions, to hear the wail of the lost soul in Hades and the shriek of the fiend. An extra puff from a blow-hole, of which there are probably forty or fifty, or a snort, the rumble and the crash of rock, made it more weird than words can describe; the depression from the sulphur and fatigue were telling on me, and I began to feel that, if another snowstorm came on and those Indians could not return to wind us up, my strength would hardly hold out.

"I cannot depict the horror of that thought!

"The first streaks of daylight dawned, the first faint flicker of a new-born day gleamed above our heads. I continued my investigations and took measurements of the crater, inspected the sulphur deposits round the blow-holes, turned over some of the stones forming the bottom of the crater, which exposed the yellow flour sulphur beneath which was solid rock sulphur, and tired, but happy, felt my work was completed, and then —oh, joy of it!—we saw, 1,300ft. above our heads, the Indians who had returned to fetch us waving their arms, to show us they were there. The night was over, the work accomplished, but how dizzy and strange I felt as I clambered with difficulty up those snow steps which the Indian guides had cut, to the spot where the loose rope was waiting.

"'The señor is not well,' cried one of the guides, 'the sulphur has been too much'; and he and his companion quickly pushed my body through the noose, and then I felt myself ascending, ascending. What was this terrible feeling of depression? It seemed to be growing every moment. Was I losing consciousness, or what? Then in my half-stupefied condition I realized that the Indians had not fixed the noose properly, and the cords were pressing upon my chest and were being tightened by my own weight, to the discomfort of my poor labouring lungs. It seemed as though I should never reach the top. How slowly those men on the ledge worked the winch! Things began to swim, and the icicles—which had been bad enough going down—were a thousand times worse coming up, for their sharp, jagged points caught me in my ascent, and my legs were too tightly bound to enable me to keep off from the edges of the crater. My ears began to sing, the walls of the crater seemed to be closing in upon me, those blow-holes below roared more distinctly, and then they seemed to stop: everything seemed to stop, a sort of hazy dulness came upon me, a suffocating feeling that I could not breathe, and then! . . . .

"I found myself lying on the snow on the edge of the crater, near the winch, an Indian standing over me pouring aguardienta—a Mexican stimulant—down my throat. The physical fatigue, the mental strain, the want of food and sleep, the sulphurous fumes, and the altitude had been too much for me; but not for long, and by the time the other two guides reached the ridge I was all right again. How beautiful it all looked, how

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clear, how bright, and even at the altitude of so many thousand feet the air seemed pure and fresh compared to the stifling atmosphere of the sulphur caldron below."

The story was simply told—Mr. Toomer claimed no credit to himself for any part of the adventure. He undertook a piece of work and did it—that was all, according to his account; but was it all? Did it not show the pluck of the man, the powers of endurance, the dogged determination of the Englishman to accomplish whatever lay before him? It is such men as this of whom a country is proud; it is our engineers who have done so much towards planting the British flag in many lands and have brought respect and admiration in its wake.

The tall, well-made man before me told his tale so simply, yet I felt what agony of mind had lain behind, what physical torture those sulphur fumes meant. I knew his capacity, for only a year earlier I had seen him jump overboard a grounded steamer in one of those rivers of Southern Mexico, in which I was travelling with sixteen gentlemen — including Mexican ministers, engineers, etc., on an inspection trip—and, taking a long pole in his hand, help and direct the native sailors to get our boat off a sand-bank on which she had stuck. He worked for hours in the water, which sometimes reached his armpits, directing here, arranging there, or giving a hand himself somewhere else. He worked harder than any native — he, a European in a tropical land. He is not a man easily daunted, or he would never have spent a night in the crater of a volcano.

"How did you ever get down the mountain again?" I inquired.

"Oh, that was easy enough; the horror was over, the mission accomplished, and the delightful and perhaps the most exciting moment was then to begin. Placing ourselves on little native grass mats, just the sort of mat that the Indian uses for carrying his load of sulphur, we tobogganed to the bottom. An Aztec placed himself in front of me, I sat immediately behind him with my legs round his body, and with a wild whoop we were off. The pace was splendid, it was like an express train as we sped over the freshly-fallen snow, and in a few minutes had actually passed the snow-line. It had taken us five hours to go up, it took us five minutes to come down, and then we were speeding somewhat less quickly into the sand. A few minutes only, and we had descended several thousand feet; but, as we got lower, bumps and thumps over the sand with its rocky excrescences made it necessary to relinquish the mat and walk. Thoroughly revived by the fresh air and exhilarating descent, we were heartily ready for a meal after the weird wonders of a night spent in the crater of a volcano."



"WE TOBOGGANED TO THE BOTTOM."

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ANY break in the monotony of life in the little seaside village of Pygwyllion was rare, and when posters were put up stating that Professor Schlafmacher, of Berlin, the renowned hypnotist, would give a lecture in the schoolroom, and exemplify his powers on any who cared to go upon the stage, there was considerable excitement amongst all the population. All, that is to say, except Captain John Tompkins and myself, Robert Jones, both late of the merchant service. We had each, on our retirement, settled down in this remote little place, where I had purchased a small cottage, whilst Tompkins boarded in the schoolmaster's house. We had not previously known each other, but we naturally soon became acquainted, and our having been in the same profession, together with a community of taste in tobacco and other matters, had in the course of seven years ripened the acquaintance into a close friendship, and a day seldom passed in which we were not to be seen in one another's company. Tompkins and I had, of course, seen a good deal of the world in our way, and we rather prided ourselves on being hard-headed, practical men of experience, who could see as far as most people and were not to be imposed on. Therefore, when the rest of the village was anxiously looking forward to the approaching lecture we remained calm and unmoved, took our pipes, grog, and walks as usual, and betrayed no excitement.

We talked about it to one another, though. "Ever seen any of this hypnotism, Bob?" asked Tompkins. I said I had once been to a performance where a man had pretended to mesmerize a woman, and made her tell how many shillings someone in the audience —a confederate, no doubt — had in his pocket, and so on. "All arranged beforehand, of course," I concluded.

"Nothing genuine, eh?"

"Well, not quite that, perhaps. He got two girls up on the stage and gave them

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some beans, which he said were chocolate creams, and just as they were going to eat them he told them they were black beetles, and, by Jove! you should have seen them drop those beans and jump on the chairs and shake themselves. I think that was genuine. They looked a mighty weak-minded lot."

"That sort of thing wouldn't do with you and me, would it, Bob?"

"Not much," said I. "I should like to come across the man who could hypnotize either of us, Jack!"

"It wouldn't be a bad joke to go and see the show, would it?" said he.

"All right," said I. "Let's go." And so, when the afternoon arrived, to the astonishment probably of many of the audience, Tompkins and myself put in an appearance.

Punctually to the moment the lecturer stepped on to the platform. He was a man of about forty-five, or perhaps fifty, and there was nothing remarkable about him except his eyes, which had a peculiar expression of depth which I cannot attempt to describe. I had never seen any eyes like them. He spoke in very good English with somewhat of a foreign accent, and his manner was perfectly quiet and free from affectation. In a few opening remarks he explained that he trusted we should not regard him as wishing to impose on us by any deception, but simply as the exponent of certain powers possessed, more or less, by all, but little known and less cultivated, which were capable of working the greatest benefits to the world when properly exercised. Any confederation was, as we could see for ourselves, impossible, since the whole audience were practically known to one another, and it was from them only that the subjects of his experiments would be taken. He begged us to judge what we might see with impartiality, and then to ask ourselves whether he was in any sense exaggerating the tremendous possibilities which might result from a more general and intelligent recognition of his science.

The lecturer then asked that some of the audience would come on to the stage. As there seemed to be some hesitation in complying with this, he said, "Perhaps there is some lady present who will play us a little tune upon the piano? Will anyone be so kind?"

Hereupon a little girl, the daughter of the schoolmaster, stepped forward, after some urging from her mother, and was helped on to the platform by the professor. He opened the piano and placed a seat for her. But here a hitch occurred. It appeared that the intending performer could not recollect her piece, and her music was at home.

"Ach! that is very awkward," said the professor. "But, tell me, is your music in a book?"

She said it was, in a book "about so big" (holding out her hands), and with a green cover.

There were some books on a shelf near the piano, and the professor, taking down one of about the size described, with a brown cover, on which was inscribed in large letters, "Copy-Book," placed it before her, and, touching her head lightly with his hand, said, "Is this not the same book as yours? Yes? That is very fortunate. Will you please find the place, for you see I do not know which is your tune?" The little girl turned over six or seven pages rapidly, and then, keeping her eyes fixed on a statement, in large text hand, that "Honesty is the best policy," played her little tune through carefully and correctly. When she had finished the lecturer thanked her politely, and, taking her hand, led her to the steps.

"I think," he then said, "that the piano will perhaps be in the way of the performances presently. Will anyone be so good as to help me to move it back a little?"

Two hulking youths at once started forward; but, to our great astonishment, no sooner had they mounted the platform than one immediately thrust his hand into his waistcoat after the manner of a sling, whilst the other limped to the nearest chair and, sitting down, put one foot on his knee and nursed it most tenderly; the faces of both wearing an expression of intense pain.

"Dear me," said the professor, "this is very sad, and so very sudden! Please let me look at your foot." He went to the youth on the chair, and after looking at him a moment said, "My young friend, you are either very foolish or you play a little joke on me. You have not hurt this foot at all. It is the other one that pains you." Instantly the young man dropped the foot to the ground with a crash of his heavy boot, and seizing the other one placed it most gingerly over the other knee, whilst he groaned heavily.

"That is better," said the professor; "and now, my friend, let me see your wrist. Ach! yes! I must make you a proper sling for it." He turned away for an instant, and then, facing them again, said, pointing to a corner of the stage, "Will you please move the piano over there? I think that will be the

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best place." Both youths at once jumped up, and the instrument was placed in the desired position; after which they returned to their seats in the room, apparently wondering what on earth there could be to excite the roars of laughter in which the audience indulged.

I cannot give an account of all the experiments. Suffice it to say that people were made to shiver with cold, or wipe their foreheads from heat; that they shot imaginary bears with walking-sticks, and ran from visionary mad dogs. Those sang, or at least tried to, who never sang before; and the sexton, a preternaturally solemn person, danced a hornpipe on the table. Tompkins and I regarded it all with openly superior smiles. The professor had got a wonderfully soft lot!



"THE SEXTON, A PRETERNATURALLY SOLEMN PERSON, DANCED A HORNPIPE ON THE TABLE."

After about an hour the lecturer again addressed us. Though such exhibitions might seem, he said, to some of us to have something of the marvellous about them, there was, he assured us, nothing of the sort in reality. All the results which we had seen were caused merely by the imposition of his will for the time on the person operated on. The strength of the will-power, like the strength of the muscles, could be greatly developed by constant practice. At the same time, as a very strong man might at some period or other be confronted with one still stronger, so it might happen that the trained hypnotist might meet with a subject with will-power equal to or greater than his own, over whom he might fail to exercise any influence. Such an occurrence at a lecture like the present was, of course, inconvenient; but any genuine professor of hypnotism who, as it were, challenged a whole audience must be, of course, prepared to face the possibility. Admitting the power of the operator to be sufficient, he desired to call our attention to the fact that as it was possible, as we had seen, to induce sensations of pain, it was also possible in many cases to remove it by the same agency, often permanently. Such cures were, however, not suitable for public exhibition, and he was happy to think, judging from their appearance, that his present audience were not in need of such treatment. This was, however, a most important part of his science, and one which ought to receive far more attention than had been at present accorded to it. Time was drawing on, and he must shortly leave; but he had still some minutes to spare, and would be pleased to see a few more of the audience on the stage, if any were disposed to come.

"Bob," whispered Tompkins, "I'm going up."

"Right, old man," said I. "I'm with you."

The professor bowed politely as we appeared on the platform, but looked at us, I thought, doubtfully, as at possibly difficult subjects.

"Kindly be seated, gentlemen," he said.

We took chairs on either side of the stage, and facing one another. The professor kept us waiting whilst he was apparently looking for something in his pockets. He

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didn't seem to find it, and I got so tired of waiting to be operated on that I closed my eyes. I fancy that, strangely enough, I must have dozed off for a moment, for I woke up with a start just in time to see Tompkins open his eyes and stare at me. Just then the professor spoke.

"I am extremely sorry, gentlemen, but I find that I have mistaken the time. Allow me to ask your pardon, and to express my great regret for the trouble I have given you; I trust you will excuse me."

Of course, we returned to our seats, and the professor, after briefly thanking the audience for their attention, hurried out to his cab and drove off to the nearest station.

"Thought he wouldn't tackle us, Bob," said Tompkins, when we got outside. "Wouldn't have done to fail just at the end. All bunkum about the time, you know. Had a quarter of an hour more, easy." I agreed with him. Indeed, it was such a palpable case of running away that I felt quite sorry for the professor.

If I live to be a hundred I shall never forget the awakening the following morning: the first drowsy feeling that something had gone wrong, the clearer impression that the something was very serious, and then the full recollection of the whole horror. Could it be but a dream? Alas! no. Too well did I recall the dreadful details. I sat up in bed, and the whole ghastly sequence of events repeated itself.

I had gone to bed, and to sleep, but had woke again. I had looked at my watch. It was just after eleven. I felt wide awake, and after tossing about restlessly a short time I determined, finding sleep impossible, to go out for a stroll. I dressed, and let myself quietly out. I walked on slowly, without thinking where I was going, till I found myself on the small wooden pier that runs out into the bay—a favourite resort of Tompkins and myself. What was my astonishment to see Tompkins standing there. He explained that he, like myself, could not sleep, and preferred strolling out to a wakeful night in bed. I was very glad to see him, and we walked up and down and smoked together. The night was fairly light, but somewhat cloudy. Our conversation turned presently on the lecture that afternoon.

"You did get just a little bit queer when you were on the stage, though, didn't you?" said Tompkins.

"What do you mean?" said I.

"Why, you shut your eyes," said he.

"I didn't," said I—but I knew this was not true.

"I saw you," said he.

"I saw you open yours," said I.

"You didn't," said he.



"'WHY, YOU SHUT YOUR EYES,' SAID HE."

"I did," said I.

"That's a lie," said he. And then some devil got hold of me, and—we were walking by the edge of the pier and Tompkins was on the outside—I gave him a push, and over he went into two fathoms of water.

He couldn't swim, and I can't either, and he fell too far out for me to reach him, even had I tried. But I didn't. I must have been mad, I suppose. I just stood there and saw him go under once, twice, and the third

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time. The clock struck twelve as he sank finally. And then I had walked home and gone to bed.

This was the recollection the morning brought me—I had committed a foul and dastardly murder. I had slain one who was as a brother to me, and the brand of Cain was on me for ever.

How I got up and dressed I don't know. My brain was all in a whirl, the one clear idea being that I must try to conceal my crime. There were no witnesses. No one had seen me go out or come in, and if Tompkins's body were found there was no reason for supposing he had been thrown in by anybody at all. He might very easily have fallen in. No; I had only to keep cool and collected, and no suspicion could possibly attach to me. If anyone were suspected, it would certainly not be his best friend.

I nerved myself, therefore, to swallow some breakfast, after which I took my hat and coat and told my servant I was going over for the day to the neighbouring town, where I had a little business to attend to. I actually forced myself to turn back, as if by an afterthought, and say that if Captain Tompkins should call he was to be told that I might not be home till late, but would see him in the morning. Once clear of the village I walked as if my life depended on it. Where I went I hardly know. I believe I had some food somewhere, but it was mostly walk, walk all day. I knew I must return at night, and intuitively I made my way back in the evening.

And then, as I neared the village, came the awful feeling that I must go down to the pier and see if Tompkins's body were there. It was late for Pygwyllion—about ten—and there would be no one about. The more I resisted this gruesome impulse the stronger did it grow. The hideous attraction that the scene of his crime has for the murderer was upon me, and I was compelled to yield to it.

I went down to the pier, and stood there with my eyes wide open for any observer, and my ears alert for any sound. There was neither one nor the other. Except for the soft plash of the water all was silent as the grave. I hesitated for an instant, and then stole softly on to the pier. The structure, as explained, was of wood and built on piles, and near its outer end there were steps at either side leading down to a sort of lower platform, used for a landing from boats. It was my idea to go down to this platform, where I might see the body if, as was very possible, it had been washed in amongst the piles. I climbed carefully and quietly down the slippery steps—and there, standing against the railing and looking down into the water, was a dark form.

The figure turned its head at the sound of my footsteps. Its face was of a ghostly pallor, and its features were the features of Tompkins. The eyes appeared to me to gleam with concentrated hate as it gazed at me, and I felt each individual hair of my head assume an erect position as I stared in turn at the awful apparition.

"Why are you here?" whispered the spectre, in scarcely audible tones, which seemed to tremble with rage. "Why are you here?"

I hardly know how I forced myself to reply, but I managed to stammer out, "I c—c—came to look for you."

"To look for me!" echoed the apparition. "Yes! I have always heard so. There is no peace for the murderer. None! Haunted! Always haunted! Haunted till he dies from the terror. Yes! day and night I shall see you. No darkness can shut from the eye of the murderer the presence, the constant presence, of his victim's spirit. Oh! the horror of it!"

I gave a dismal groan. It was awful.

"I'll go to the police," I began; but the spectre interrupted me.

"I shall do that," it said. "You forget that they wouldn't see you; no one sees you but me. You're dead, you know: since last night, when I threw you over the pier. I saw you go down three times; and I never even tried to save you, when perhaps I might have done so. But I'll give myself up in the morning. I'd rather be hanged than haunted. And when I am perhaps you'll be at rest."

The sudden relief I felt was almost too much for me. It was evident that it was not Tompkins's spirit, but Tompkins in the flesh that I had found, and I was therefore not a murderer in fact, although I certainly had been one in intention. On the other hand, it was clear that Tompkins, having in some way got out of the water (although I could have sworn I saw him drown), had lost his wits from the shock and become insane. This, however, was my salvation, for so long as he imagined himself to be the murderer and not the intended victim, as he really was, he certainly would not bring any charge against me. It was evidently my cue to avoid in any way disturbing this illusion, and, indeed, to foster it carefully. I should have to explain to him that I was not dead,

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but had escaped in some extraordinary way. Thereupon Tompkins would fall on my neck and shed tears of joy, whilst I should magnanimously forgive him and he would remain indebted to me for life. It seemed perfectly simple. I began at once, in a solemn voice.

"Why did you throw me off the pier last night?"

"Torture me not," cried Tompkins, in a tone of agony. "I know you will haunt me till I'm hanged, but don't keep on like this. It's not regular. You oughtn't to speak. Dead people don't talk, you know."

"Answer me," I replied. "I command you."

"You know very well," said he. "We quarrelled about that show yesterday, and you told me I'd been to sleep on the stage, and I told you it was a lie; and then you said—— but what is the use of going over it again? I threw you in, and you're dead."

"What would you give to know I was alive?" said I.

"Give? Why, anything. But you're as dead as Moses, you know. You can't swim—I mean, you couldn't when you were alive."

"Tompkins," I said, "would you be surprised to hear that I'm not dead? That I—er—that I learnt to swim—er—last week, and that I—er—dived, just to frighten you—and climbed out when you went away?"

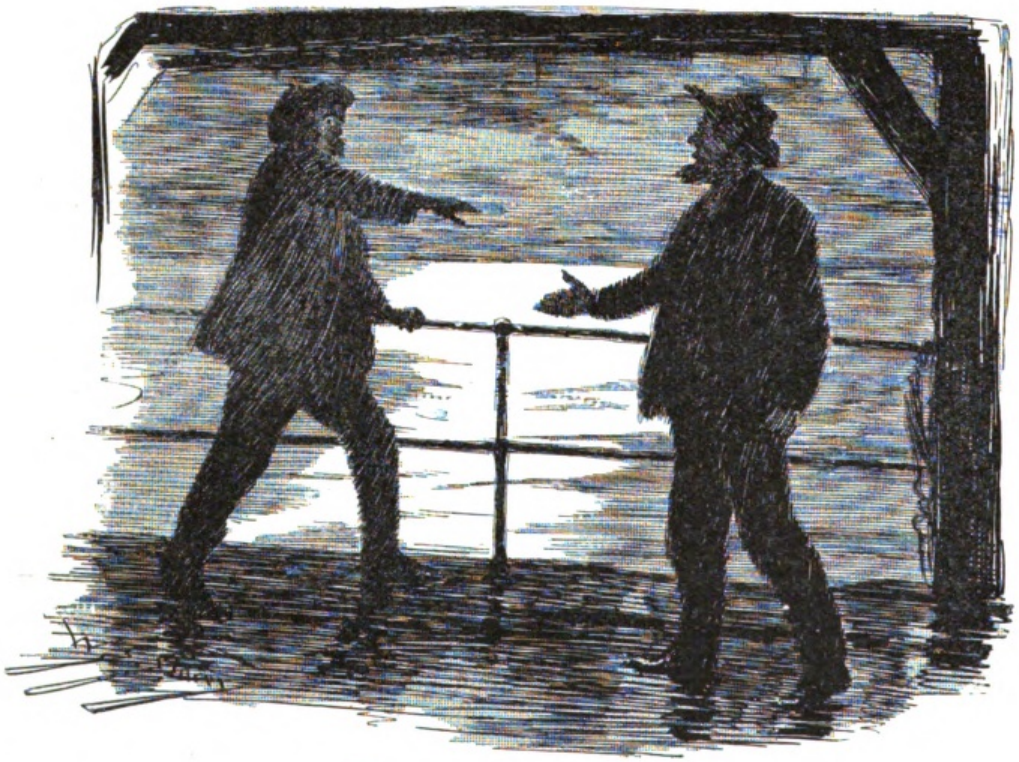
"Don't mock me," cried Tompkins, reproachfully. "I murdered you. You're dead; and I'm going to give myself up."

"I'm not dead," I said.

"You are," he persisted.

"Feel my hand," said I, and I made a step towards him.

He recoiled in horror. "Keep off!" he almost screamed. "I won't! I can't!



"'KEEP OFF!' HE ALMOST SCREAMED."

You're only an appearance. You ought to vanish now and let me go home, and then come in the night again and stand over me. You shouldn't go on this way."

"Look here," I said, rather loudly, for I was getting irritated—a man who insists on calling himself a murderer when the body is alive and wanting to shake hands with him is an annoying person—"don't call me an appearance. I'm as solid as you are. What's this?" and I sprang on him suddenly and gave him a couple of smart blows on the chest.

Now this kind of thing is not usually soothing in effect, but the look of intense relief that came over Tompkins's face as he received the thumps I have never seen equalled. The deadly pallor fled; and, if

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he did not literally fall on my neck, he wrung my hands till they ached, and the moonlight showed something very like tears in his eyes.

Soon, however, his face fell. "Bob, old man," he said, sadly, "I *meant* to drown you. It's no credit to me that you're alive. I shall go and give myself up for attempted murder."

"Don't be an idiot," I returned. "You haven't any proof. You don't suppose I'm going to charge you, do you?"

"You must," he said.

"Must, be blowed," said I. "There is no harm done. That sort of thing is quite common—amongst friends. A little temper, that's all. Why, I might have done it to you, instead."

"Aren't you going to do anything, then?" he asked, doubtfully.

"Yes," I said, "I am. I'm going home to have a drink, and you're coming with me."

And so it happened that, ten minutes later, two retired merchant skippers, each of whom regarded himself as the would-be murderer of the other, might have been seen marching amicably up the little street of Pygwyllion, arm in arm, to the residence of one of them, on liquid refreshment bent.

On arriving at my cottage I called to my old servant, Mary, to bring whisky and glasses. Now, Mary had lived with us during my wife's lifetime, and remained with me ever since, and on the strength of long service claimed privileges, one of which was to find fault with me whenever she pleased—which, to tell the truth, was pretty frequently. She always insisted on remaining up till I was at home and, as she considered, safe for the night, and held ideas about late hours which she made no scruple of expressing. Possibly my tone of voice was lacking in that humility suitable to a return home somewhat later than usual, and exhibited inappropriate cheerfulness. When a man suddenly finds that he has not committed a murder of which he believed himself guilty, and that, moreover, he is not to be called to account even for the attempt, there is undoubtedly something inspiriting in the situation, and it is possible that my voice may have been unduly jubilant. At any rate, old Mary appeared to think so. She set the bottle and glasses on the table with as much banging as was consistent with their safety, and delivered herself of the following:—

"A nice hour for a respectable gentleman to come home, Captain Jones, certainly! And I suppose you'll be sitting up the best of the night now. You'd better make the most of the whisky; there's no more. And for goodness' sake don't forget to bolt the door after you've let Captain Tompkins out. Perhaps he'll sleep on the sofa, though. And when you do go to bed I hope you'll make less noise than you did last night, keeping me awake with your snoring and grunting and talking in your sleep till the clock struck twelve. And now I'll wish you good-night."

"Did you hear that, Bob?" said Tompkins, when she had gone. "Old lady had the nightmare badly. Why, at twelve o'clock last night you were just drow—I mean diving—down by the jetty."

"Never mind that, old man," said I. "It's all over. Take some grog."

Now, what glorious luck! I thought to myself. If my dear friend here should ever, which Heaven forbid, find out the rights of the matter, what a witness for an alibi! Unsolicited testimony to my being at home. And the old girl would swear to it with the best conscience.

"Bob, old chap, here's your health, and Heaven bless you for a kind-hearted fellow!"

Just then old Mary put her head in at the door and snapped out, as she threw a letter on the table, "This came for you this evening; I forgot it."

When the door was closed I took the letter up and examined it. It was addressed in a strange hand, and bore the postmark of a town some miles distant. On opening the envelope an inner cover appeared, on which was the following inscription:—

"To Captains Jones and Tompkins,
"Pygwyllion.

"The writer begs that the enclosed may be read by the above-named gentlemen in the presence of each other."

The letter itself I here give in full:—

"Gentlemen,—In adopting the profession of a hypnotist, I did so not so much as a means of making money as from a desire to benefit my fellow-creatures, and to bring about a more extended belief in the marvellous powers of an art in relation to which such general ignorance prevails. With this end in view it has been my custom often to visit small towns and villages where the very existence of the science was perhaps unknown. It has been my good fortune to open the eyes of many to the enormous benefits offered to the human race by the legitimate practice of my profession, and I am thankful to say that I have in many cases effected radical cures

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when the patient had been given up by the faculty. Towards honest, if sceptical, inquiry I have always been patient; but to the pig-headed, obstinate self-sufficiency of half-educated people—like yourselves, gentlemen—I have sometimes, as in your case, administered a sharp lesson. I will explain myself. When you came on the stage last night you did so in obedience to the exercise of my will, although you did not think so; and I may here inform you that you proved yourselves two of the easiest subjects to influence that I have met with. The smallest exertion only on my part was necessary. I must call to your recollection that you both felt a momentary sensation of sleepiness, after which I apologized for dismissing you. That instant, gentlemen, allowed me to impress on your minds (which in such matters are abnormally weak) the idea that each of you had murdered his friend by throwing him off the jetty. But this is not all. I willed that this impression should not come into force until you were asleep last night. Whether this has happened as I intended I leave it to yourselves to say. I fear you may, perhaps, have been inconvenienced, but I can assure you that after the receipt of this letter you need fear no further interference in your affairs from me.

"I will merely add that I should strongly advise you not again to oppose your puny and untrained wills to a power the extent of which your very narrow intellects are quite incapable of realizing. In the hands of an unscrupulous operator the results to you might be much more serious than those caused by

"Yours faithfully,

"KARL SCHLAFMACHER,

"Professor of Hypnotism."



We looked at one another, but for some time nothing was said. When at length Tompkins broke the silence his remark seemed to be somewhat wanting in relevancy.

He said, "Bob, my boy, pass the grog."

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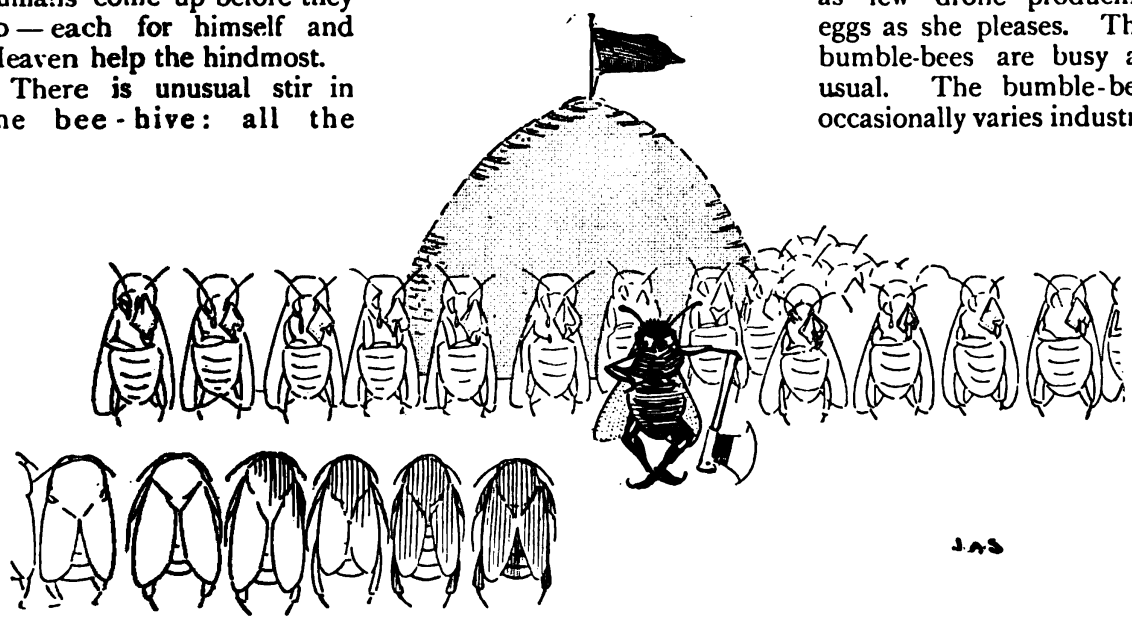


By E. D. Cuming and J. A. Shepherd.

A FAR-AWAY gun-shot reminds the wild duck that shooting begins to-day, 1st August: and with a warning word she calls the whole fleet of nine inexperienced flappers and convoys them to safety in among the reeds.

"The Twelfth" comes round, and the maternal grouse, collecting her brood about her, makes for the steep hillside; her idea, apparently, is to give the sportsmen a "gruelling" over rough, steep ground, that they shall not be able to shoot straight. It must be a nervous moment for the family when mamma peeps over the heather and comes down, saying: "That wretched old liver and white pointer scents us; he's standing like a rock!" but they wait until the humans come up before they go — each for himself and Heaven help the hindmost.

There is unusual stir in the bee-hive: all the workers, females who don't lay eggs, are moving around with an air of eager sententious rectitude tempered by display of pocket-handkerchief; and all the drones, males who do not work, but without whom the species would die out in one season, are standing about in sullen resignation. The word has gone forth and the drones are to be executed to-day. "It is our duty," say the worker bees, firmly but tearfully; and they take the drones, one after another, sting them to death, and throw their bodies out of doors for disposal as beetles, ants, and mice may think fit. It is strange that such a barbarous practice should obtain in highly-civilized society, the more so when we remember that the queen bee, in the exercise of an enviable prerogative, can lay as many or as few drone-producing eggs as she pleases. The bumble-bees are busy as usual. The bumble-bee occasionally varies industry



"Execution of the Drones."

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"EXIT BUMBLE."

with over-indulgence, but habitual intoxication is unknown; for this excellent reason, that he who weakly yields to the seduction of such strong waters as the honey-dew on the lime-leaf falls drunk and incapable to the ground and dies without a chance of reformation.

The only reason for referring here to the angler is that most people make acquaintance with his remains in August. The angler looks as though he had escaped from a sailor's nightmare or the property-room at Drury Lane. Starting from a very presentable tail the fish widens steadily, to concentrate all his physical powers in a grin of the broadest; a ghastly grin it is, too. Nature in sportive mood set upon the head of the fish a filament like a limp driving whip with a rag lash; and from this instrument and the use the owner makes of it the angler obtains his name.

Why Nature, when she furnished
us with both a rod and line,
Could not complete the outfit
nor afford us chance to ask it,
Has always been a mystery to
me and friends of mine,
Who have to go a-fishing with-
out landing-net or basket.

We do our little best, of course;
each by some rocky shelf
Sits dangling out his little bait
where little fishes swim.
Each contemplative angler is a
basket for himself,
And never ceases fishing till he's
filled him to the brim.

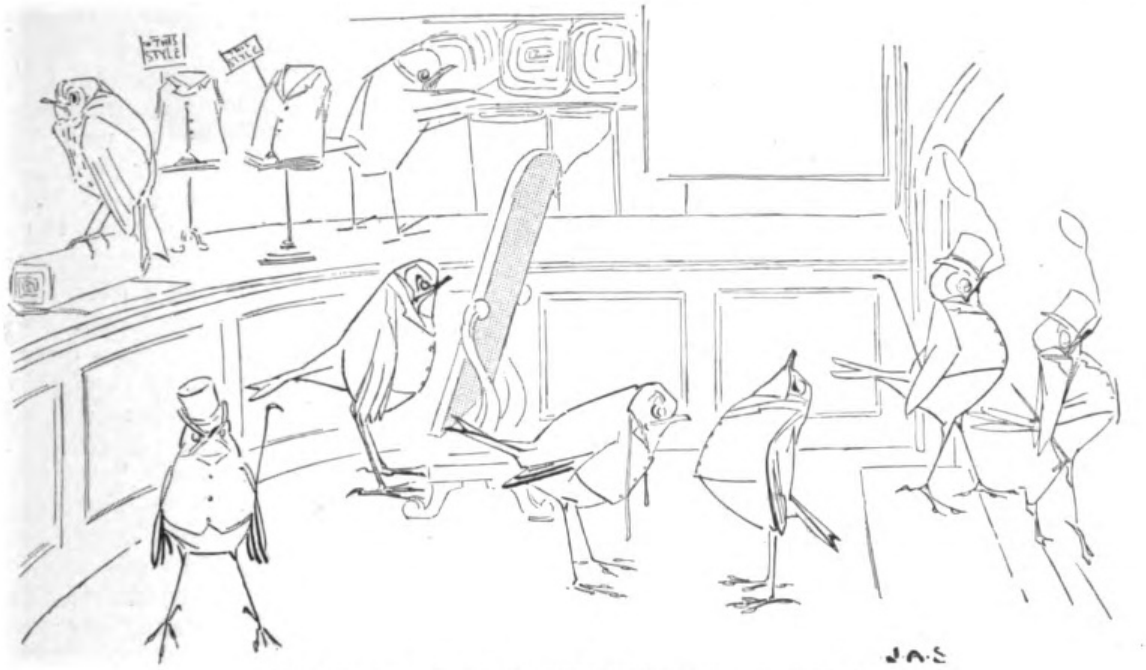
He has an equally cordial welcome for a dead cat or a ship's mop. His inhospitable portals are always open, and this, when he comes beachwards, works his undoing. The receding waves carry quantities of sand into his mouth and the tide goes out leaving him stranded, a pitiable example of sand ballast misapplied.

The cuckoos are packing up to go south; they have so much confidence in the nurses who took charge of their children that they need not wait. The young cuckoos will find their own way to Africa as their parents and grandparents did. The good people of Borrowdale, in Cumberland, are said to have attempted to detain the cuckoo for the winter by building a wall; which proceeding, if true, said more for the hearts than the heads of the Borrowdalians. Many of our songbirds have moulted now and are beginning to recover spirits, though



"THE CUCKOO'S FAREWELL TO HER YOUNG."

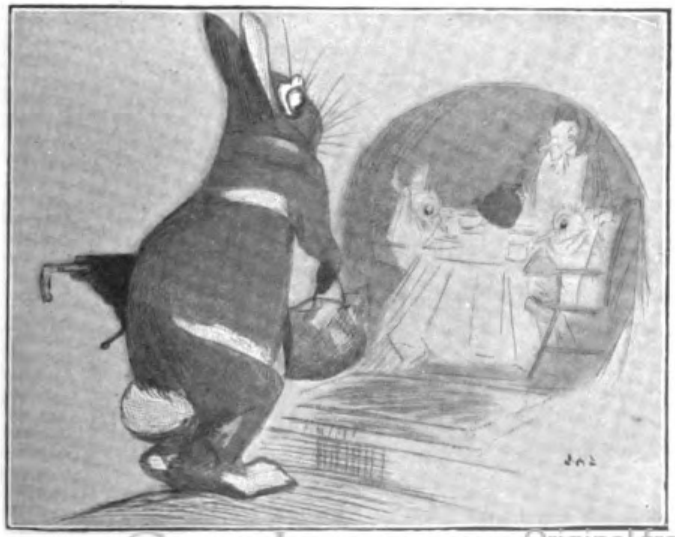
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"THE YOUNG ROBINS ARE PUTTING ON THEIR RED WAISTCOATS."

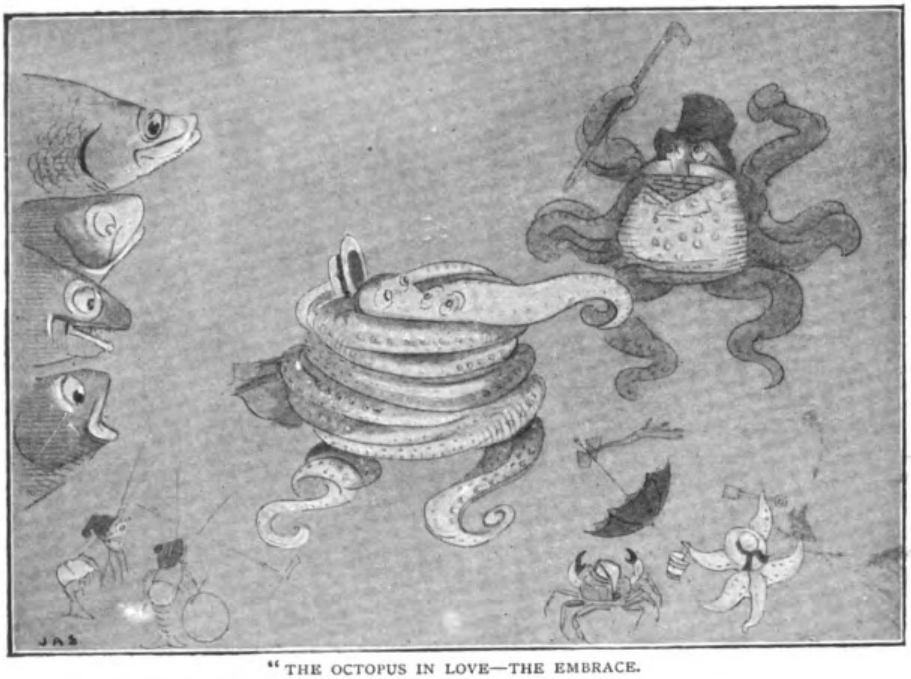
there is little singing done. Birds who leave early for the south put off changing their clothes till they reach their destination, preferring, like sensible people, to travel in shabby comfort; the cuckoos, for instance, do not change before they go, nor does the swallow. The flight feathers of the wings are shed in pairs, and as a bird must be fully equipped for such a long journey it must postpone moulting if it has to leave early in the autumn. The young robins are putting on their red waistcoats and the appropriate airs and graces; till his first moult the young cock wears a spotted waistcoat. Late individuals of various species have eggs or children to occupy their time. The ring-ouzels are still weighed down with nursery cares if they decided to rear a second brood; the house-martin and the yellow-hammer are engaged with family number two; the stock-dove who, like the shelduck and puffin, has a fancy for billeting herself on a rabbit, may still be tending her twins in the burrow. It must be an irritating thing for the rabbit to come home and find the lodger giving her children tea in the passage, so that he cannot get beyond his own hall-door mat. The kittiwake gulls, dilatory creatures, have probably still some children in arms to look after.

The octopa--pardon the convenient inaccuracy—has hatched out the ropes of eggs she has been watching over so jealously for the last fifty days in the rocky retreat she calls her nest; the youngsters are lively, but, being no larger than fleas at birth, are likely to escape notice for some time to come. The maternal octopus gives herself up so wholeheartedly to her nursery duties, which consist chiefly of sitting still and blowing water over the egg-ropes, that her health suffers; and by the time the children are born she is not the creature she was when, newly wedded, she left



"THE LODGER GIVING HER CHILDREN TEA IN THE PASSAGE."

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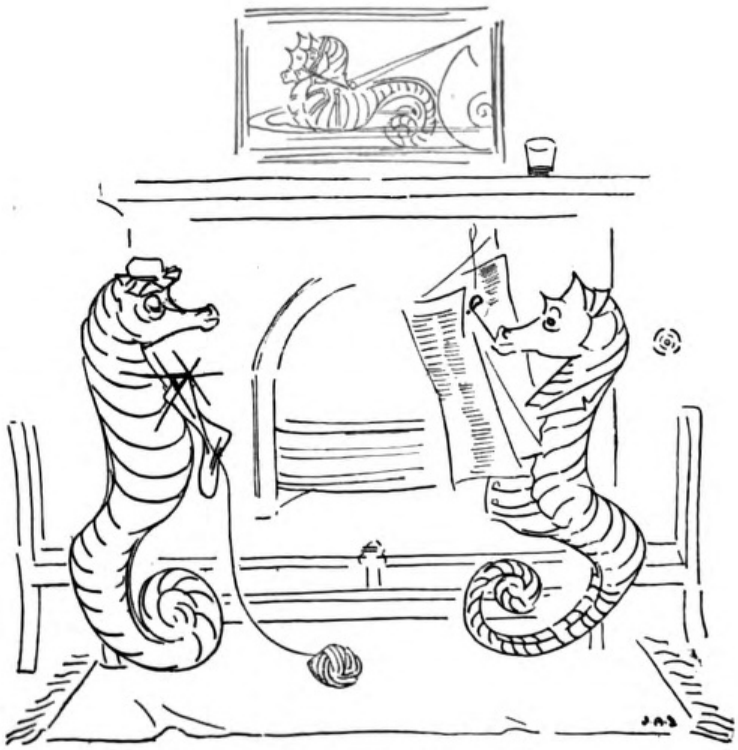
"THE OCTOPUS IN LOVE—THE EMBRACE.

home with her husband in June. The sternest octopus papa must feel himself at a loss if once a wayward daughter and her lover hurl themselves into each other's arms :—

What can I do? Eight arms on either side
Make more a Gordian than a lovers' knot.
I can't undo it, hard as I have tried,
I *must* consent to give him what he's got.

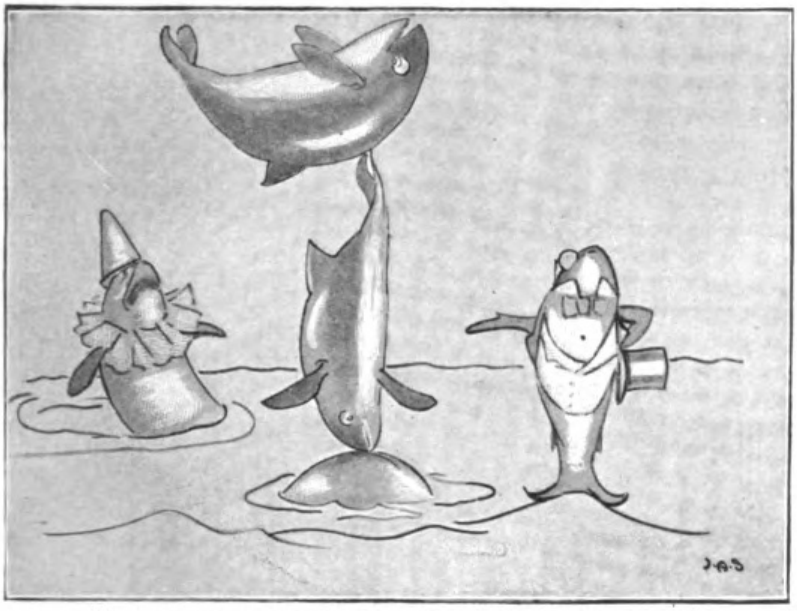
Bless you, then, children! Stem those floods of—tears,
Conscience must prick you very hard, I think;
Don't fog the water round you thus, my dears,
Surely betrothals are not sealed with—ink.

The octopus, as a rule, is sparing of his ink, and does not discharge it without good reason. His relative, the cuttlefish, on the other hand, will envelop himself in a cloud of the very best sepia if you even look at him — this extravagance is the outcome of shyness. Stranded on the beach you may occasionally find the shrunken remains of one of the pipe-fish — a strange creature, like a young eel in plate armour with a long tube-like snout ending in the smallest of unclassically-cut mouths. The male pipe-fish is the victim of Woman's Rights. When his wife lays her eggs (only a couple of hundred, but pipe-fishes have few foes, thanks to their mail, and their nursery methods forbid needless profusion) she makes them over to her husband, who arranges them in rows along his underside and keeps them till they hatch out. The pipe-fish is not intelligent. He will wind his prehensile tail about any buoy-rope or drifting stick without the elementary precaution of inquiring what the thing is: and holds on in foolish faith till lifted into boat or stranded on shore. The hippocampus, or sea-horse — one of Nature's most successful efforts in the grotesque, by the way—is even more advanced than the pipe-fish. The sea-horse is equipped with a sac under his tail, and when the sea-mare lays her eggs she packs them into that



"QUIET IN DOUBLE HARNESS."

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"DAILY PERFORMANCES BY THE PORPOISES DURING THE SEASON."

and leaves to her mate all the responsibility of hatching. Although the sea-horse is thus imposed upon by his wife, the pair appear to be on the most affectionate terms. They hold on to weeds by their tails and cling lovingly to one another: Dr. Day has even seen them rubbing their heads in a sea-horse kiss, and has heard them coughing exchange of endearments. The amiable porpoise is playing leap-frog with a party of friends within hail of the beach: porpoise existence appears to be one giddy whirl of gratuitous acrobatic performance for the benefit of visitors to the seaside: this animal—the meekest porpoise would resent being called a fish—does not go out to sea, preferring the excitements, and fish, of inshore waters, and is equally cheerful and irrepressible whether you meet him off Greenland or in the tepid Mediterranean.

The wasps are abroad in their hundreds: the wasp is an intelligent fellow, as witness the discretion which bids him come out of a hole in pear or plum business end first; but his selfishness is something monumental. When he finds food, though there be enough to supply a thousand wasps for the whole summer, he never tells a friend — but you can read his character for yourself any morning on the breakfast table:—

What says my brother? In the jam you sink,
You grow more feeble? Death is very near?
Your fate's my warning, but I rather think
That I may safely taste the jam from here.

Let me avoid the spots that sticky feel—
Peace, brother, peace! Refrain from sob and groan;
I am at breakfast, don't disturb my meal.
Light on my breast lie sorrows not my own!

It is a curious thing, but birds appear to enjoy immunity from wasp sting. Blackbirds, tits, and martins eat them greedily; the two former will hang on to the paper-like nest and devour the insects by the dozen.

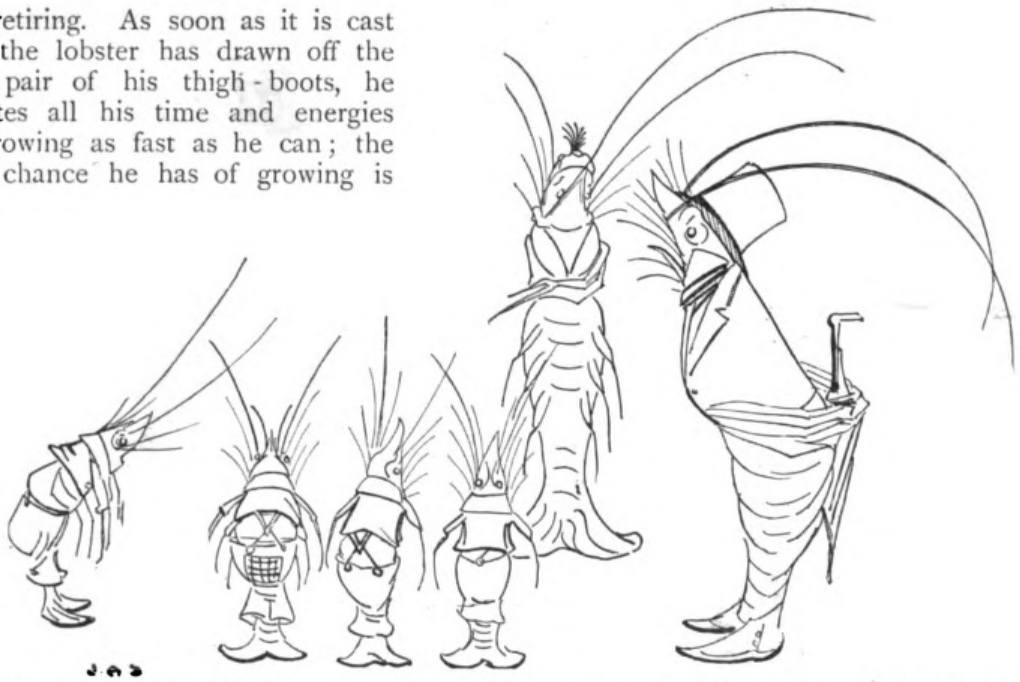
The hen lobster's eggs generally hatch out in July or August: for a time she carried them—12,000 or more—about with her, stuck upon the underside of her body, but as the "berry" swelled locomotion became difficult, and she regretfully buried them in the sand. She is an exemplary parent, and sometimes keeps about her such of her family as survive the perils of infancy till they attain to a length of six inches, by which time they are hardened enough to face the world on their own account. The hen lobster produces a family and gets a new dress in alternate years: this latter sounds like a hardship, but no question of hen lobster's rights is involved, though the cock does get a new suit every August. Changing his or her coat of mail is a serious business; when the old one is coming off the patient is sick, sorry,



"MR. WASP DROPS IN TO BREAKFAST."

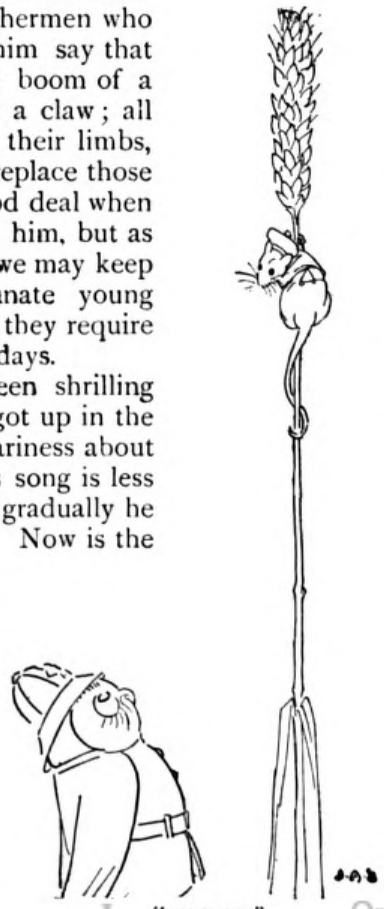
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and retiring. As soon as it is cast and the lobster has drawn off the last pair of his thigh-boots, he devotes all his time and energies to growing as fast as he can; the only chance he has of growing is after laying off his old coat and before the new mail shall harden, so he grows with a will. As soon as the new coat is hard he begins to make up for lost meals, feeding ravenously. The lobster seems to suffer from nerves—at all events, fishermen who are on intimate terms with him say that a loud clap of thunder or the boom of a ship's gun will make him shed a claw; all crustaceans set little value on their limbs, as they can grow new ones to replace those lost. The lobster suffers a good deal when his armour gets too small for him, but as that happens only once a year we may keep our sympathy for the unfortunate young prawns, who grow so fast that they require new shell-jackets every twelve days.



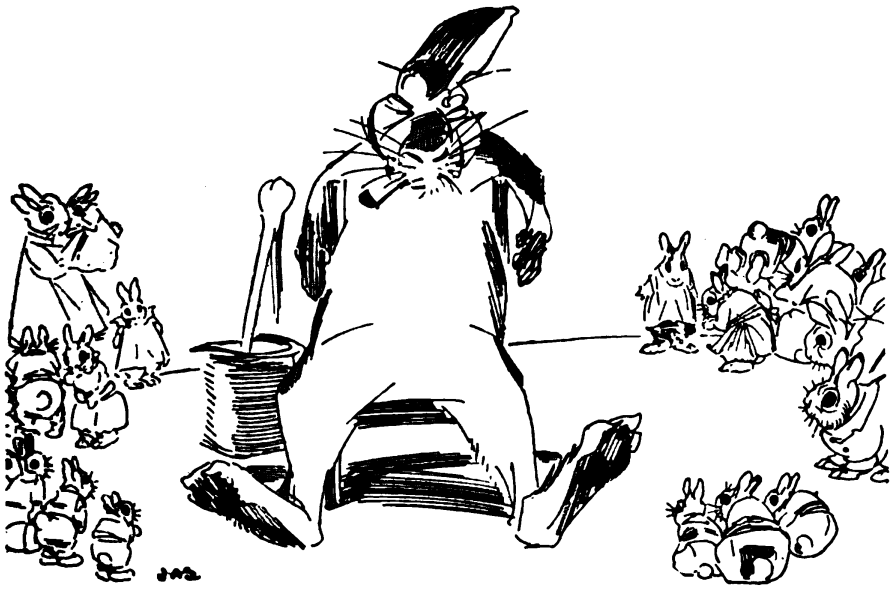
"THE YOUNG PRAWNS REQUIRE NEW SHELL-JACKETS EVERY TWELVE DAYS—MORE EXPENSE FOR FATHER PRAWN."

The field-cricket, who has been shrilling with tireless energy since he got up in the spring, shows symptoms of weariness about the beginning of August: his song is less continuous, less strident; and gradually he gives up singing for the year. Now is the summer of discontent for the harvest-mouse, who, by the way, is the only British mammal who possesses an even partially prehensile tail; he uses that organ as a fifth hand, more particularly when descending the wheat stem in a hurry. Much addicted to weaving his beautiful ball of a nest among the stems of standing corn, and fond of climbing to the ears of wheat on which he sits to lunch and enjoy the scenery, the harvest-mouse views the reaping-machine with pardonable disapprobation. He doubtless owes his name to the fact that harvesting operations are so generally instrumental in revealing, and bringing ruin to, his domestic hearth: the chances are in favour of there being babies in the nest whenever it be brought to light, for, like the rest of his kind, he is an enthusiastic family man who loves to surround himself with children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren to the fifth and sixth generation. When the corn is stooked the tawny and barn owls come from far and near to range the fields, self-appointed special constables in the agricultural interest. Every mouse is *de facto* an offender, and if he fall into the clutches of the law as personified by an owl his fate is sealed. The pheasant sometimes amuses himself by killing and eating mice; it is an injudicious practice, as the dead mouse frequently sticks in his gullet and chokes him.



"ON DUTY."

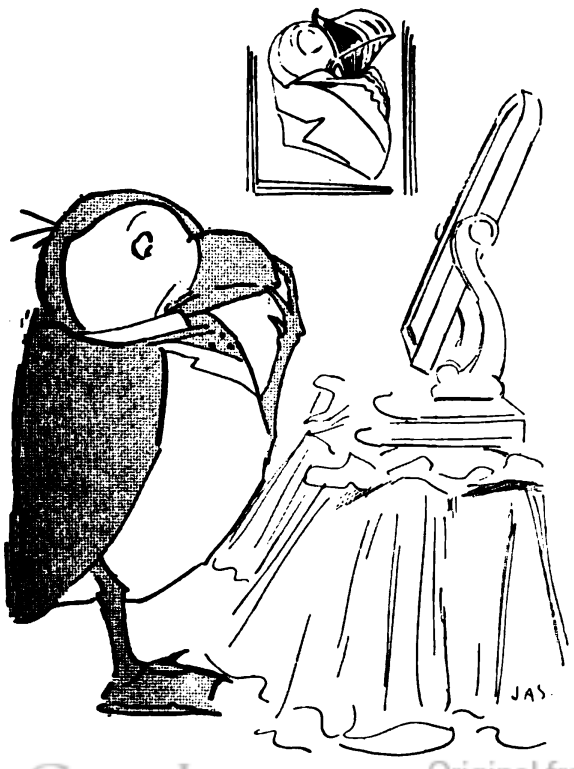
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"THE BUCK RABBIT'S RETURN."

Stoats and weasels at this season occasionally get up hunting parties of fifteen or twenty — perhaps two families combine for sport — and display reckless courage; a party of twenty weasels has been known to attack a collie dog, either from sheer bravado or downright savagery; they are, as we know, prone to kill from wanton love of slaughter, and twice twenty weasels would hardly know how to dispose of a 50lb. dog when they had worried him to death. The rabbit is still engaged on private affairs, which indulgence itself can hardly admit as urgent, in view of the fact that they have been recurrently on hand ever since March. The conduct of the buck-rabbit suggests that he regards these superabundant children with disapproval; for if, in despite of his wife, he makes his way into the nursery he is likely to kill a few of them. There is no excuse for this behaviour; the mind of the most intellectual rabbit is hardly likely to be influenced by the doctrine of Malthus, and he cannot plead over-work, for his wife does everything; she even tears off her own clothes to make her babies warm and comfortable.

The 23rd of August comes round and the punctual puffins leave the breeding grounds to fly seaward and distribute themselves on distant rocks and islets: the puffin has more reason than most birds to withdraw from society during the autumn moult. There is no great difference between the clothes he takes off and the dress he will put on, it is true: but there is that wonderful bill to be considered. Nature bestows upon him the beautiful red and blue arrangement with chaste yellow stripes as a wedding gift that he may be pleasing in the eye of hen puffins—it doesn't say much for their taste, but let that pass. The breeding season over, Nature, with callous disregard of the cock's feelings and without reflecting on the shock it must give his wife, takes off the puffin's bill in pieces, as though it were after all a false nose to hide the neutral-tinted and insignificant snub beneath. Consider, I pray you, the emotions of the young puffin whom this loss befalls for the first time.



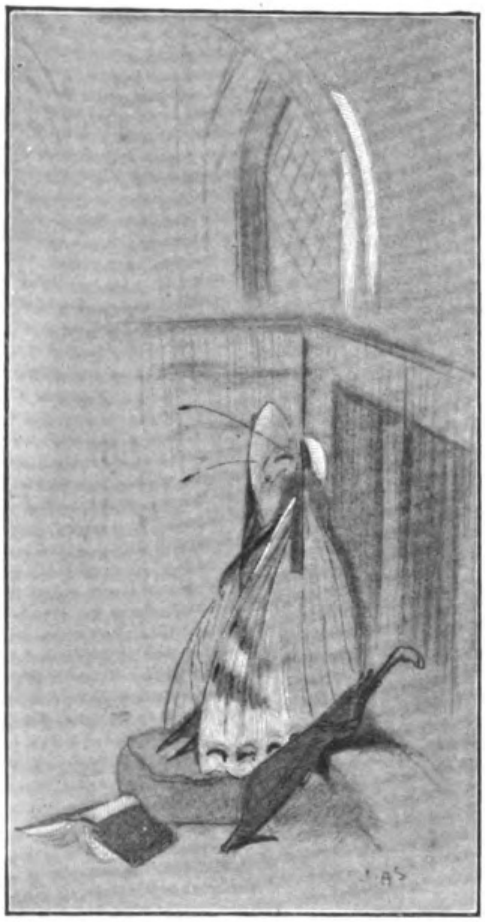
"NATURE TAKES OFF THE PUFFIN'S BILL IN PIECES."

The guillemots are leaving their rock-ledges also, to scatter for the autumn and winter: there is, in point of fact, a general breaking up for the holidays, the education of the young birds being finished. The herons leave the heronry and

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resort to the marshes and streams. The curlews send their children to the waterside to learn the science of mud-probing, and go thither themselves, keeping apart from the young people, however. Thanks to their long bills the curlews live better and keep in fatter condition in winter than other mud-larking species who cannot explore so deeply.

The end of the month draws near and the swifts go. There is no preparation, no assemblage of travelling companions: the company about the steeple have been growing more restless and soaring in loftier realms than usual for a few days, and one evening the silence tells you they are gone. Cruel is the fate of the backward young swift who has not learned to fly perfectly by the time his people start for the south; he is left behind to die of cold and starvation, if he cannot find his way to Africa all by himself. The young swallows and the house-martins of the first brood are congregating on the roofs to discuss in eager twitterings the wonders of the new country their parents have described.



"SLEEPING THROUGH SERMONS FOR NINE MONTHS."

The great caterpillar of the Death's Head moth seeks seclusion underground in August to pass into the chrysalis state. The peacock butterfly emerges from the chrysalis to enjoy a few weeks' gaiety before retiring for the winter. The active career of most butterflies in the winged state of existence is short; the large tortoiseshell who came out in the middle of July is quite content to go to bed for the winter in the middle of August; and, like other butterflies who hibernate in the complete state, will get up about May to lay eggs and die. Some of the butterflies, as we might expect of such giddy, undomestic creatures, have no idea of home comfort, and spend the winter in the chilliest fashion. A small tortoiseshell was observed by a parson one Sunday in August to enter his church during the service and settle on the ceiling; and there the clerico-entomological eye marked the insect, Sunday after Sunday, hanging to the naked beam for nine months, a sound sleeper.

The Red Admiral appears in August: his steadiness of character is open to criticism, for he is rather addicted to going out at night when well-conducted butterflies are in bed. The Painted Lady is expected at this season too, but she is so irregular in her habits that entomologists impatiently declare it impossible to lay down any precise rules for her metamorphoses: she is even more irresponsible than other butterflies.



"THE PAINTED LADY."

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Blundell's Improvement



By W. W. JACOBS

VENIA TURNBULL in a quiet, unobtrusive fashion was enjoying herself. The cool living-room at Turnbull's farm was a delightful contrast to the hot sunshine without, and the drowsy humming of bees floating in at the open window was charged with hints of slumber to the middle-aged. From her seat by the window she watched with amused interest the efforts of her father—kept from his Sunday afternoon nap by the assiduous attentions of her two admirers—to maintain his politeness.

"Father was so pleased to see you both come in," she said, softly; "it's very dull for him here of an afternoon with only me."

"I can't imagine anybody being dull with only you," said Sergeant Dick Daly, turning a bold brown eye upon her.

Mr. John Blundell scowled; this was the third time the sergeant had said the thing that he would have liked to say if he had thought of it.

"I don't mind being dull," remarked Mr. Turnbull, casually.

Neither gentleman made any comment.

"I like it," pursued Mr. Turnbull, longingly; "always did, from a child."

The two young men looked at each other; then they looked at Venia; the sergeant assumed an expression of careless ease, while John Blundell sat his chair like a human limpet. Mr. Turnbull almost groaned as he remembered his tenacity.

"The garden's looking very nice," he said, with a pathetic glance round.

"Beautiful," assented the sergeant. "I saw it yesterday."

"Some o' the roses on that big bush have opened a bit more since then," said the farmer.

Sergeant Daly expressed his gratification, and said that he was not surprised. It was only ten days since he had arrived in the village on a visit to a relative, but in that short space of time he had, to the great discomfort of Mr. Blundell, made himself wonderfully at home at Mr. Turnbull's. To Venia he related strange adventures by sea and land, and on subjects of which he was sure the farmer knew nothing he was a perfect mine of information. He began to talk in low tones to Venia, and the heart of Mr. Blundell sank within him as he noted her interest. Their voices fell to a gentle murmur, and the sergeant's sleek, well-brushed head bent closer to that of his listener. Relieved from his attentions, Mr. Turnbull fell asleep without more ado.

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Blundell sat neglected, the unwilling witness of a flirtation he was powerless to prevent. Considering her limited opportunities, Miss Turnbull displayed a proficiency which astonished him. Even the sergeant was amazed, and suspected her of long practice.

"I wonder whether it is very hot outside?" she said, at last, rising and looking out of the window.

"Only pleasantly warm," said the sergeant. "It would be nice down by the water."

"I'm afraid of disturbing father by our talk," said the considerate daughter. "You might tell him we've gone for a little stroll when he wakes," she added, turning to Blundell.

Mr. Blundell, who had risen with the idea of acting the humble but, in his opinion, highly necessary part of chaperon, sat down again and watched blankly from the window until they were out of sight. He was half-inclined to think that the exigencies of the case warranted him in arousing the farmer at once.

It was an hour later when the farmer awoke, to find himself alone with Mr. Blundell, a state of affairs for which he strove with some pertinacity to make that aggrieved gentleman responsible.

"Why didn't you go with them?" he demanded.

"Because I wasn't asked," replied the other.

Mr. Turnbull sat up in his chair and eyed him disdainfully. "For a great, big chap like you are, John Blundell," he exclaimed, "it's surprising what a little pluck you've got."

"I don't want to go where I'm not wanted," retorted Mr. Blundell.

"That's where you make a mistake," said the other, regarding him severely; "girls like a masterful man, and, instead of getting your own way, you sit down quietly and do as you're told, like a tame—tame——"

"Tame what?" inquired Mr. Blundell, resentfully.

"I don't know," said the other, frankly; "the tamest thing you can think of. There's Daly laughing in his sleeve at you, and talking to Venia about Waterloo and the Crimea as though he'd been there. I thought it was pretty near settled between you."

"So did I," said Mr. Blundell.

"You're a big man, John," said the other, "but you're slow. You're all muscle and no head."

"I think of things afterwards," said Blundell, humbly; "generally after I get to bed."

Mr. Turnbull sniffed, and took a turn up and down the room; then he closed the door and came towards his friend again.

"I dare say you're surprised at me being so anxious to get rid of Venia," he said, slowly, "but the fact is I'm thinking of marrying again myself."

"*You!*" said the startled Mr. Blundell.

"Yes, me," said the other, somewhat sharply. "But she won't marry so long as Venia is at home. It's a secret, because if Venia got to hear of it she'd keep single to prevent it. She's just that sort of girl."

Mr. Blundell coughed, but did not deny it. "Who is it?" he inquired.

"Miss Sippet," was the reply. "She couldn't hold her own for half an hour against Venia."

Mr. Blundell, a great stickler for accuracy, reduced the time to five minutes.

"And now," said the aggrieved Mr. Turnbull, "now, so far as I can see, she's struck with Daly. If she has him it'll be years and years before they can marry. She seems crazy about heroes. She was talking to me the other night about them. Not to put too fine a point on it, she was talking about you."

Mr. Blundell blushed with pleased surprise.

"Said you were *not* a hero," explained Mr. Turnbull. "Of course, I stuck up for you. I said you'd got too much sense to go putting your life into danger. I said you were a very careful man, and I told her how particular you was about damp sheets. Your housekeeper told me."

"It's all nonsense," said Blundell, with a fiery face. "I'll send that old fool packing if she can't keep her tongue quiet."

"It's very sensible of you, John," said Mr. Turnbull, "and a sensible girl would appreciate it. Instead of that, she only sniffed when I told her how careful you always were to wear flannel next to your skin. She said she liked dare-devils."

"I suppose she thinks Daly is a dare-devil," said the offended Mr. Blundell. "And I wish people wouldn't talk about me and my skin. Why can't they mind their own business?"

Mr. Turnbull eyed him indignantly, and then, sitting in a very upright position, slowly filled his pipe, and declining a proffered match rose and took one from the mantelpiece.

"I was doing the best I could for you,"

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he said, staring hard at the ingrate. "I was trying to make Venia see what a careful husband you would make. Miss Sippet herself is most particular about such things—and Venia seemed to think something of it, because she asked me whether you used a warming-pan."

Mr. Blundell got up from his chair and, without going through the formality of bidding his host good-bye, quitted the room



"SHE ASKED ME WHETHER YOU USED A WARMING-PAN."

and closed the door violently behind him. He was red with rage, and he brooded darkly as he made his way home on the folly of carrying on the traditions of a devoted mother without thinking for himself.

For the next two or three days, to Venia's secret concern, he failed to put in an appearance at the farm—a fact which made flirtation with the sergeant a somewhat uninteresting business. Her sole recompense was the dismay of her father, and for his benefit she dwelt upon the advantages of the Army in a manner that would have made the fortune of a recruiting-sergeant.

"She's just crazy after the soldiers," he said to Mr. Blundell, whom he was trying to spur on to a desperate effort. "I've been watching her close, and I can see what it is now; she's romantic. You're too slow and ordinary for her. She wants somebody more dazzling. She told Daly only yesterday afternoon that she loved heroes. Told it to him to his face. I sat there and heard her. It's a pity you ain't a hero, John."

"Yes," said Mr. Blundell; "then, if I was, I expect she'd like something else."

The other shook his head. "If you could only do something daring," he murmured; "half-kill somebody, or save somebody's life, and let her see you do it. Couldn't you dive off the quay and save somebody's life from drowning?"

"Yes, I could," said Blundell, "if somebody would only tumble in."

"You might pretend that you thought you saw somebody drowning," suggested Mr. Turnbull.

"And be laughed at," said Mr. Blundell, who knew his Venia by heart.

"You always seem to be able to think of objections," complained Mr. Turnbull; "I've noticed that in you before."

"I'd go in fast enough if there was anybody there," said Blundell. "I'm not much of a swimmer, but——"

"All the better," interrupted the other; "that would make it all the more daring."

"And I don't much care if I'm drowned," pursued the younger man, gloomily.

Mr. Turnbull thrust his hands in his pockets and took a turn or two up and down the room. His brows were knitted and his lips pursed. In the presence of this mental stress Mr. Blundell preserved a respectful silence.

"We'll all four go for a walk on the quay on Sunday afternoon," said Mr. Turnbull, at last.

"On the chance?" inquired his staring friend.

"On the chance," assented the other; "it's just possible Daly might fall in."

"He might if we walked up and down five million times," said Blundell, unpleasantly.

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"He might if we walked up and down three or four times," said Mr. Turnbull, "especially if you happened to stumble."

"I never stumble," said the matter-of-fact Mr. Blundell. "I don't know anybody more sure-footed than I am."

"Or thick-headed," added the exasperated Mr. Turnbull.

Mr. Blundell regarded him patiently; he had a strong suspicion that his friend had been drinking.

"Stumbling," said Mr. Turnbull, conquering his annoyance with an effort—"stumbling is a thing that might happen to anybody. You trip your foot against a stone and lurch up against Daly; he tumbles overboard, and you off with your jacket and dive in off the quay after him. He can't swim a stroke."

Mr. Blundell caught his breath and gazed at him in speechless amaze.

"There's sure to be several people on the quay if it's a fine afternoon," continued his instructor. "You'll have half Dunchurch round you, praising you and patting you on the back—all in front of Venia, mind you. It'll be put in all the papers and you'll get a medal."

"And suppose we are both drowned?" said Mr. Blundell, soberly.

"Drowned? Fiddlesticks!" said Mr. Turnbull. "However, please yourself. If you're afraid——"

"I'll do it," said Blundell, decidedly.

"And mind," said the other, "don't do it as if it's as easy as kissing your fingers; be half-drowned yourself, or at least pretend to be. And when you're on the quay take your time about coming round. Be longer than Daly is; you don't want him to get all the pity."

"All right," said the other.

"After a time you can open your eyes," went on his instructor; "then, if I were you, I should say, 'Good-bye, Venia,' and close 'em again. Work it up affecting, and send messages to your aunts."

"It sounds all right," said Blundell.

"It *is* all right," said Mr. Turnbull. "That's just the bare idea I've given you. It's for you to improve upon it. You've got two days to think about it."

Mr. Blundell thanked him, and for the next two days thought of little else. Being a careful man he made his will, and it was in a comparatively cheerful frame of mind that he made his way on Sunday afternoon to Mr. Turnbull's.

The sergeant was already there conversing in low tones with Venia by the window, while Mr. Turnbull, sitting opposite in an oaken armchair, regarded him with an expression which would have shocked Iago.

"We were just thinking of having a blow down by the water," he said, as Blundell entered.

"What! a hot day like this?" said Venia.

"I was just thinking how beautifully cool it is in here," said the sergeant, who was hoping for a repetition of the previous Sunday's performance.

"It's cooler outside," said Mr. Turnbull, with a wilful ignoring of facts; "much cooler when you get used to it."

He led the way with Blundell, and Venia and the sergeant, keeping as much as possible in the shade of the dust-powdered hedges, followed. The sun was blazing in the sky, and scarce half-a-dozen people were to be seen on the little curved quay which constituted the usual Sunday afternoon promenade. The water, a dozen feet below, lapped cool and green against the stone sides.

At the extreme end of the quay, underneath the lantern, they all stopped, ostensibly to admire a full-rigged ship sailing slowly by in the distance, but really to effect the change of partners necessary to the afternoon's business. The change gave Mr. Turnbull some trouble ere it was effected, but he was successful at last, and, walking behind the two young men, waited somewhat nervously for developments.

Twice they paraded the length of the quay and nothing happened. The ship was still visible, and, the sergeant halting to gaze at it, the company lost their formation, and he led the complaisant Venia off from beneath her father's very nose.

"You're a pretty manager, you are, John Blundell," said the incensed Mr. Turnbull.

"I know what I'm about," said Blundell, slowly.

"Well, why don't you do it?" demanded the other. "I suppose you are going to wait until there are more people about, and then perhaps some of them will see you push him over."

"It isn't that," said Blundell, slowly, "but you told me to improve on your plan, you know, and I've been thinking out improvements."

"Well?" said the other.

"It doesn't seem much good saving Daly," said Blundell; "that's what I've been thinking. He would be in as much danger as I should, and he'd get as much sympathy; perhaps more."

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"Do you mean to tell me that you are backing out of it?" demanded Mr. Turnbull.

"No," said Blundell, slowly, "but it would be much better if I saved somebody else. I don't want Daly to be pitied."

"Bah! you are backing out of it," said the irritated Mr. Turnbull. "You're afraid of a little cold water."

"No, I'm not," said Blundell; "but it would be better in every way to save somebody else. She'll see Daly standing there doing nothing, while I am struggling for my life. I've thought it all out very carefully. I know I'm not quick, but I'm sure, and when I make up my mind to do a thing, I do it. You ought to know that."

"That's all very well," said the other; "but who else is there to push in?"



"'BAH! YOU ARE BACKING OUT OF IT,' SAID THE IRRITATED MR. TURNBULL."

"That's all right," said Blundell, vaguely. "Don't you worry about that; I shall find somebody."

Mr. Turnbull turned and cast a speculative eye along the quay. As a rule, he had great confidence in Blundell's determination, but on this occasion he had his doubts.

"Well, it's a riddle to me," he said, slowly. "I give it up. It seems—— *Halloa!* Good heavens, be careful. You nearly had *me* in then."

"Did I?" said Blundell, thickly. "I'm very sorry."

Mr. Turnbull, angry at such carelessness, accepted the apology in a grudging spirit and trudged along in silence. Then he started nervously as a monstrous and unworthy suspicion occurred to him. It was an incredible thing to suppose, but at the same time he felt that there was nothing like being on the safe side, and in tones not quite free from significance he intimated his desire of changing places with his awkward friend.

"It's all right," said Blundell, soothingly.

"I know it is," said Mr. Turnbull, regarding him fixedly; "but I prefer this side. You very near had me over just now."

"I staggered," said Mr. Blundell.

"Another inch and I should have been overboard," said Mr. Turnbull, with a shudder. "That would have been a nice how d'ye do."

Mr. Blundell coughed and looked seawards. "Accidents will happen," he murmured.

They reached the end of the quay again and stood talking, and when they turned once more the sergeant was surprised and gratified at the ease with which he bore off Venia. Mr. Turnbull and Blundell followed some little way behind, and the former gentleman's suspicions were somewhat lulled by finding that his friend made no attempt to take the inside place. He looked about him with interest for a likely victim, but in vain.

"What are you looking at?" he demanded, impatiently, as Blundell suddenly came to a stop and gazed curiously into the harbour.

"Jelly-fish," said the other, briefly. "I never saw such a monster. It must be a yard across."

Mr. Turnbull stopped, but could see nothing, and even when Blundell pointed it out with his finger he had no better success. He stepped forward a pace, and his suspicions returned with renewed vigour as a hand was laid caressingly on his shoulder. The next moment, with a wild shriek, he shot suddenly over the edge and disappeared. Venia and the sergeant, turn-

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ing hastily, were just in time to see the fountain which ensued on his immersion.

"Oh, save him!" cried Venia.

The sergeant ran to the edge and gazed in helpless dismay as Mr. Turnbull came to the surface and disappeared again. At the same moment Blundell, who had thrown off his coat, dived into the harbour and, rising rapidly to the surface, caught the fast choking Mr. Turnbull by the collar.

"Keep still," he cried, sharply, as the farmer tried to clutch him; "keep still or I'll let you go."

"Help!" choked the farmer, gazing up at the little knot of people which had collected on the quay.

A stout fisherman who had not run for thirty years came along the edge of the quay at a shambling trot, with a coil of rope over his arm. John Blundell saw him and, mindful of the farmer's warning about kissing of fingers, etc., raised his disengaged arm and took that frenzied gentleman below the surface again. By the time they came up he was very glad for his own sake to catch the line skilfully thrown by the old fisherman and be drawn gently to the side.



"WITH A WILD SHRIEK HE SHOT SUDDENLY OVER THE EDGE."

"I'll tow you to the steps," said the fisherman; "don't let go o' the line."

Mr. Turnbull saw to that; he wound the rope round his wrist and began to regain his presence of mind as they were drawn steadily towards the steps. Willing hands drew them out of the water and helped them up on to the quay, where Mr. Turnbull, sitting in his own puddle, coughed up salt water and glared ferociously at the inanimate form of Mr. Blundell. Sergeant Daly and another man were rendering what they piously believed to be first aid to the apparently drowned, while the stout fisherman, with both hands to his mouth, was yelling in heart-rending accents for a barrel.

"He—he—push—pushed me in," gasped the choking Mr. Turnbull.

Nobody paid any attention to him; even Venia, seeing that he was safe, was on her knees by the side of the unconscious Blundell.

"He—he's shamming," bawled the neglected Mr. Turnbull.

"Shame!" said somebody, without even looking round.

"He pushed me in," repeated Mr. Turnbull. "He pushed me in."

"Oh, father," said Venia, with a scandalized glance at him, "how can you?"

"Shame!" said the bystanders, briefly, as they watched anxiously for signs of returning life on the part of Mr. Blundell. He lay still with his eyes closed, but his hearing was still acute, and the sounds of a rapidly-approaching barrel trundled by a breathless Samaritan did him more good than anything.

"Good-bye, Venia," he said, in a faint voice; "good-bye."

Miss Turnbull sobbed and took his hand.

"He's shamming," roared Mr. Turnbull, incensed beyond measure at the faithful manner in which Blundell was carrying out his instructions. "He pushed me in."

There was an angry murmur from the bystanders.

"Be reasonable, Mr. Turnbull," said the sergeant, somewhat sharply.

"He nearly lost 'is life over you," said the stout fisherman. "As plucky a thing as ever I see. If I 'adn't ha' been 'andy with that there line you'd both ha' been drownded."

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"Give—my love—to everybody," said Blundell, faintly. "Good - bye, Venia. Good-bye, Mr. Turnbull."

"Where's that barrel?" demanded the stout fisherman, crisply. "Going to be all night with it? Now, two of you——"

Mr. Blundell, with a great effort, and assisted by Venia and the sergeant, sat up. He felt that he had made a good impression, and had no desire to spoil it by riding the barrel. With one exception, everybody was regarding him with moist-eyed admiration. The exception's eyes were, perhaps, the moistest of them all, but admiration had no place in them.

"You're all being made fools of," he said, getting up and stamping. "I tell you he pushed me overboard for the purpose."

"Oh, father! how can you?" demanded Venia, angrily. "He saved your life."

"He pushed me in," repeated the farmer. "Told me to look at a jelly-fish and pushed me in."

"What for?" inquired Sergeant Daly.

"Because——" said Mr. Turnbull. He looked at the unconscious sergeant, and the words on his lips died away in an inarticulate growl.

"What for?" pursued the sergeant, in triumph. "Be reasonable, Mr. Turnbull. Where's the reason in pushing you overboard and then nearly losing his life saving you? That would be a fool's trick. It was as fine a thing as ever I saw."

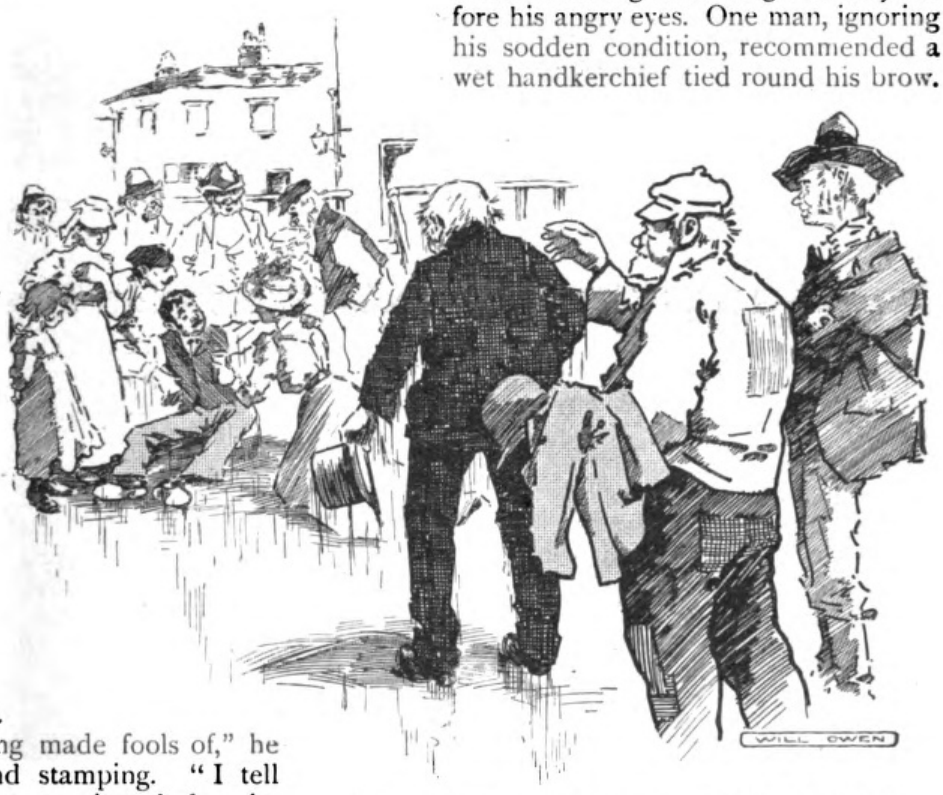
"What you 'ad, Mr. Turnbull," said the stout fisherman, tapping him on the arm, "was a little touch o' the sun."

"What felt to you like a push," said another man, "and over you went."

"As easy as easy," said a third.

"You're red in the face now," said the stout fisherman, regarding him critically, "and your eyes are starting. You take my advice and get 'ome and get to bed, and the first thing you'll do when you get your senses back will be to go round and thank Mr. Blundell for all 'e's done for you."

Mr. Turnbull looked at them, and the circle of intelligent faces grew misty before his angry eyes. One man, ignoring his sodden condition, recommended a wet handkerchief tied round his brow.



"YOU TAKE MY ADVICE AND GET 'OME AND GET TO BED."

"I don't want any thanks, Mr. Turnbull," said Blundell, feebly, as he was assisted to his feet. "I'd do as much for you again."

The stout fisherman patted him admiringly on the back, and Mr. Turnbull felt like a prophet beholding a realized vision as the spectators clustered round Mr. Blundell and followed their friends' example. Tenderly but firmly they led the hero in triumph up the quay towards home, shouting out eulogistic descriptions of his valour to curious neighbours as they passed. Mr. Turnbull, churlishly keeping his distance in the rear of the procession, received in grim silence the congratulations of his friends.

The extraordinary hallucination caused by the sunstroke lasted with him for over a week, but at the end of that time his mind cleared and he saw things in the same light as reasonable folk. Venia was the first to congratulate him upon his recovery; but his extraordinary behaviour in proposing to Miss Sippet the very day on which she herself became Mrs. Blundell convinced her that his recovery was only partial.

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From Behind the Speaker's Chair.

LXXVI.

(VIEWED BY HENRY W. LUCY.)

ARCHIVES OF THE HARCOURT FAMILY.

THE manuscripts preserved at Welbeck Abbey by the Duke of Portland contain some interesting references to the representative of the Harcourt family in the classical times of Queen Anne. On the 28th of November Simon Harcourt, Lord Keeper, took possession of Newnham, to-day the home of the head of the Harcourt clan.

"It is," writes Canon Stratford to Edward Harley, later second Earl of Oxford, "a very pleasant situation and a fine estate. Lord Keeper pays for it £17,000, and Tom Rowney, who managed this bargain for him, tells me it is the cheapest pennyworth that ever was bought in Oxfordshire."

The Lord Keeper had previously lived at Cockrop, where within two years he laid out £4,000. "He has bought," adds the envious Canon, "Sir Edmund Warcop's estate that joins to Cockrop for £10,000 and now this purchase for £17,000. It is plain there is money to be got by the Seals, and formerly money was got in the Treasury."



SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT AS LORD KEEPER IN THE TIME OF QUEEN ANNE.

A QUEEN ANNE "LOULOU."

The Lord Keeper had a son who bore the baptismal name of Simpkin. The Lord Keeper put him up as a candidate for Oxford University. "Harcourt," writes the Canon, "has been in town since Sunday. He spent Sunday evening at the Deanery. He dined there yesterday. He passed by my lodgings both times without calling. I am not much mortified. [Oh! Canon, Canon!] I have known the time when father as well as son would have been glad to come here when they could be admitted into no other house."

Five days later Loulou—I mean Simpkin—mindful that the Canon had a vote and some influence, remembered his old friend. "Young Harcourt sups with me to-night," the Canon writes, under date 7th December, 1712. "He called on me last night. I asked him if he had not gone by my door every day this week. He owned it, but said that he still designed to call on me before he left the town. I told him I believed I was obliged to the weather for seeing him. After a short visit he appointed to come with T. Rowney and sup with me this evening. I hope," adds the Canon, always ready, so to speak, to "go off" when the image of the Lord Keeper crosses his mind, "you will allow me to have learned somewhat since I belong to the Court when I can be upon a point of compliments with the son after I have been used so by the father. If I go on to improve in this way, I may in time be qualified for better preferment."

Through the correspondence flash many glimpses of Queen Anne's Lord Keeper, a big, bustling, competent, successful man, carrying everything before him in private company and in public life. A masterful spirit, with great contempt for mediocrity, and no cultured gift of reticence in expressing his views about it. As a study of heredity this is interesting and valuable, showing to the present generation how, in the course of three centuries, a family type may be absolutely altered.

LORD HALSBURY AS QUEEN ANNE.

At Newnham there hangs at this day a portrait of Lord Keeper Harcourt. When, a few years ago, a historic fancy dress ball was given at Devonshire House, Sir William Harcourt went in the character of his ancestor. The arrangement was not difficult, since the gown of the Chancellor of the Exchequer of to-day is, in nearly every respect, identical with that worn

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by the Lord Keeper two hundred years ago.

Amongst the stories treasured in connection with the social triumph planned and carried out by the Duchess of Devonshire is one relating to the present Lord Chancellor and Simon Harcourt's distinguished descendant. Lord Halsbury went to the ball in the character of George III. Coming across Sir William Harcourt, and a little mixed in his dates, he, with his habitual playfulness, said:—

"Are you my Lord Chancellor?"

"Yes," said Sir William Harcourt, "if your Majesty chances to be Queen Anne."

It was said at the time of the ball that Lord Halsbury's philandering as George III. was coldly looked upon in the highest quarter. "A little too near the family," Queen Victoria said, when she heard of the Lord Chancellor's selection of an otherwise not inappropriate character.



THE LORD CHANCELLOR AS GEORGE III.

A HISTORIC GOWN.

The gown of the Chancellor of the Exchequer is rarely seen by the public, which is a pity. It is as handsome as it is costly, lending a stateliness to the figure unapproachable by the art of the modern tailor. I have a vivid recollection of seeing Mr. Gladstone arrayed in it on the occasion of the opening by the Queen of the new Law Courts. Striking in appearance, even when he wore a shabby old cape endeared by association of two score years, he in this gracious robe of silk took on a new dignity. A new gown costs £150, and as it may not be worn out of office it is customary for the incoming Chancellor to purchase his predecessor's robe at a suitable reduction. In recent times there have been two notable exceptions to the rule. When, in February, 1868, Mr. Gladstone succeeded Mr. Disraeli at the Treasury the outgoing Chancellor declined to sell his raiment to his successor. There was a very good reason, which precludes the necessity of searching for personal animus to account for the departure from custom. The robe had originally belonged to Mr. Pitt, and Disraeli preferred possession of the historic relic to a cheque for £100.

The other case was that of Lord Randolph Churchill, who possessed himself of Mr. Gladstone's Chancellor's gown. Mr. Goschen, who when playing his last card for supremacy in the Cabinet Lord Randolph "forgot," would have taken the Chancellor of the Exchequer's gown with his office. Lord Randolph would hold no truck with his successor.

JOHN BRIGHT'S SPEECH-MAKING.

I felt it due to Mr. John Albert Bright to give publicity to his letter calling in question a statement made some months ago in these pages with respect to his father's practice in preparing his speeches. Mr. Bright, in support of his assertion that his father never wrote out his speeches, or even prepared voluminous notes, quotes a statement to that effect published by the great orator in the volume of his speeches. Whilst giving currency to the contradiction I am bound to say something in defence of the original statement, or rather I will let others speak. The paragraph, widely quoted, drew the following testimony from Mr. Labouchere. "Although," the editor of *Truth* writes, "I have often heard Mr. Bright speak well without a note, he generally had very copious notes in his hand when he spoke. I remember once in 1866 sitting with him in the smoking-room of the House of Commons. He was going to make during the evening a set speech, and he had before him a bundle of sheets of paper with which he had come provided. He happened to say that he wished that his speech was over, on which I asked him how far he prepared his speeches. On this he handed me the bundle and told me that I might read his notes if I pleased. They were very copious, and every now and then a lengthy phrase was inserted. This, he told me, was his usual habit. When speaking he held the bundle before him in one hand, and as soon as one sheet was exhausted he threw it away. There was no sort of concealment in this, although he seemed able to follow the notes closely without apparently reading them."

A correspondent signing himself C. P. H.

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wrote to the *Westminster Gazette*: "In 1835, I think it was, St. Crispin's Hall at Street, in Somerset, was opened by Mr. Bright, and I had the honour to preside and to have him close to me on my right side. On this occasion he certainly used very voluminous notes, and constantly referred to them, and occasionally seemed to read whole passages out of them. And when each note had served its purpose he put it into his hat, which he had placed just below the table at which I was seated."

I may add that the long-time Cabinet colleague of Mr. Bright upon whose testimony the debated point was made tells me I correctly interpreted his recollection that when, nearly forty years ago, he accompanied the Tribune on a campaign in Lancashire, Mr. Bright habitually prepared his speeches in MS. before delivering them from the platform. The probability is we are all right. At the outset of his illustrious career, and for some time after, John Bright laboriously prepared in advance his speeches, fully written out. Later he learned to swim without the corks.

HON. AND LEARNED MEMBERS.

During debates on the alteration of the hours of sitting in the House of Commons especial notice was taken of the inconvenience that would accrue to what Mr. Disraeli, with characteristic magniloquence, called the gentlemen of the long robe by the call to Westminster at half-past two in the afternoon. Obviously, men actively engaged at the Bar could not keep the appointment. When we consider the exceptional proportion of barristers in the present House the difficulty becomes serious. They considerably exceed one-sixth of the whole. It is true that all, or even a majority, of the 116 gentlemen who rank as barristers do not find their business at the Bar seriously clash with their patriotic duties at Westminster. Next to undertaking commissions for the sale of wine, being called to the Bar is the most attractive form of appearing to do business known to this generation. Irish members are peculiarly susceptible to the temptation. When Mr. Arthur Balfour is not quite certain of the status of an Irish member to whom he alludes in debate he, with instinctive desire to charm, always alludes to him as "the honourable and learned gentleman." In three cases out of five the mode of reference turns out to be correct. In addition to barristers there are twenty-four solicitors, giving us 140 legal gentlemen out of a total of 670.



M.P. OF THE EARLY 19TH CENTURY — "NO CONNECTION WITH TRADE."

A REVOLUTIONARY CHANGE.

I once heard Mr. Gladstone say that when he entered the House of Commons, nearly seventy years ago, there were not five members of the Tory party who were connected with trade or industry. The assembly, on the Tory side almost exclusively composed of the gentry and landowners, on the Liberal wing drew its strength in the main from the same source. In the present House there are only sixty-five members who rank as belonging to the once dominant class. In point of numbers they are run close by fifty-two manufacturers and distillers, forty-four merchants, not to mention, even in a whisper, thirteen shopkeepers and traders. One notable feature in the present House is the record number of newspaper proprietors and journalists. There are thirty-three all told. Taking in printers and booksellers, they almost suffice to form a quorum. "The trade" has twenty-three direct representatives, one more than banks and finance. The number is growing, being an increase of four compared with the muster at the last Parliament.

One of the odd sidelights thrown on the constitution of the House of Commons is the comparative predominance of Quakers. The Society of Friends, according to the latest return, numbered 13,000 members. They are represented in the present House of Commons by no fewer than eleven co-religionists, a number far out of proportion to the position of any other religious denomination.

THE LADIES' GALLERY.

With the courage and originality that distinguish new members, Mr. Horner this Session brought forward the question of removing the grille from the Ladies' Gallery in the House of Commons. It is curious what fascination this topic has for new members,

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and how genuine is their belief that in broaching it they are making fresh discovery of debatable land. Since another member of the family, Little Jack Horner, sat in a corner, his research and his self-appreciation crowned by the unexpected discovery of a plum in a Christmas pie, nothing has exceeded the complacency of the member for North Lambeth in fathering this fad.

The rights of women at Westminster is a cause far older than members of the reformed House of Commons can recall. Seventy years ago West Gloucestershire was represented by Mr. Grantley Berkeley. The Commons at that time sat in the old House, which provided no special accommodation for ladies attending the debate. All the same, after their attractive, indomitable manner, they got there. But it was only by climbing up to the roof and seating themselves in a contracted space constructed for purposes of ventilation. Here they could see a little, hear most things that were said, themselves unseen. Mr. Gladstone once told me he had perfect recollection of a fan fluttering down from this height, dropped from the hand of one of the unsuspected onlookers. Mr. Grantley Berkeley, pained at the inconvenience to which ladies were put, moved a resolution authorizing their admission to the gallery reserved for strangers of the other sex. This he made an annual, after the later fashion of Mr. Cobden with his motion for the abolition of the Corn Laws. Every Session the member for West Gloucestershire moved that ladies be admitted to the gallery, and every Session an ungentle majority voted him down.



AN UP-TO-DATE M.P.

The effects of his advocacy were seen when the new Houses of Parliament included a gallery for the occupation of ladies. That it should be shut off from the rest of the House by a lattice-work, a device common enough in Mohammedan lands, testifies to the timidity with which the innovation was authorized. For many years new members have in succession brought the subject up and proposed to remove the grille. Mr. Herbert Gladstone being First Commissioner of Works (and not yet married) was the first and last Minister who showed disposition to yield to the appeal avowedly put forward on behalf of ladies frequenting the House. He speedily discovered he had made a mistake and the subject dropped. Mr. Horner, sitting in his corner above the gangway, once more discovered the long familiar.

Personal information gleaned over a pretty wide field of acquaintance with *habituées* of the Ladies' Galleries — for there are two, one pertaining to the dominion of the Speaker's wife—leads me to the conviction that by a considerable and important majority the privacy bestowed by the grille more than compensates for any inconvenience inseparable from the arrangement.

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Some Dining Places.

by Leonard Larkin.



NOW, here is a subject I can talk about with some authority. In the course of a career chequered beyond the average I have dined as variously as most men, and at as varied an assortment of places; also I have failed to dine at all of them in turn, owing to "leaving my purse on the piano," as they say in the East-end when they wish to give harduppedness a respectable flavour. I have dined at the ——, but there, why should I mention their names, and so advertise them for nothing? Did they ever give me a dinner on such terms, or anything like? Not a bit of it; then let them seek the pages at both ends of this magazine if publicity is what they want. I have dined, then, at the —— and the —— and the —— and one or two others: places where I have paid for my dinner with a sum that has fed me for a month in leaner times. These are the only earthly spots where in one's working hours it is possible to reproduce the bewildered consternation of a nightmare. Were you never, in a dream, dismayed at finding yourself somehow walking down Bond Street at 4 p.m. in your nightshirt, and nothing else whatever—not so much as a watch-chain or a boot-lace? Well, one evening, go into one of these noble institutions in morning clothes, and you will feel exactly like that.

I don't think I shall say very much about such magnificent places as these. In the first place, there would be no instruction in it, for who more familiar with these halls of dazzling light than the readers of THE STRAND MAGAZINE? And in the second and last place, the whole performance, from *hors d'œuvres* to coffee, and beyond—even to the paying of the bill and the waiter's bow—is, in strict fact, dull. It is rather too decorous to be amusing. Reader, are you one of those unfortunates who are sometimes seized with an almost overpowering impulse to misbehave on solemn occasions—a mad desire to shout and turn a somersault in the middle of your own wedding service, or christening, or vaccination, or what not? I am. I have hurried out of church in the middle of a sermon because there was a large bald head in the seat before me, and I knew I could not hold out one minute longer against the horrible temptation to bang it

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with a hassock. It is terrible. Well, just in the same way I suffer at these aristocratic dining places, where you get a good dinner at about the price of a decent coat. I somehow long, burn, madly crave, just when my *perdrix aux truffes* or *beignet soufflé* is approaching in solemn state, to bawl aloud for a penn'orth of whelks. I have a sort of morbid, unwholesome craving to know what would happen. But the outrage would be something surpassing in enormity anything possible with a hassock in a church, and my courage has always failed at the critical moment. Some day, after an extra glass of Burgundy or something, I shall do it. I shall—I know I shall; and I cannot guess what will become of me then. I think I shall feel a little like a criminal whom a judge has condemned to be hanged, neglecting to mention the date. But I shall have one moment of wild, delirious joy first. Nobody can deprive me of that.

But, of course, I have had my penn'orth of whelks. Oh, yes. Not at the ——well, the places I won't advertise for nothing; but in the New Cut on Saturday night, in Shoreditch High Street, and in Camden Town. It is an experience well worth the penny, if you don't mind what happens to your stomach. If you do, it is best to begin with pepsine powder. I don't quite know the precise quantity necessary to digest a penn'orth of whelks, but I should think that about a quarter of a hundredweight ought to be enough, if you get it strong.

Whelks are eaten with vinegar, pepper, and a flavouring of naphtha-smoke. It is customary to take them standing, and at all the more *recherché* stalls they are served in saucers of three or four inches diameter. Fashionable circles have long been divided on the question of strict etiquette in consuming whelks. Formerly it was considered *de rigueur* to fish them up between the finger and thumb, though even then some leaders of society preferred plunging the muzzle boldly into the saucer and gobbling. It is now, however, generally conceded that the correct mode is to throw the head back and shovel the lot into the mouth—previously distended to the proper size — care being taken to rescue the saucer at the critical moment. The whelk is a courageous animal, full of fight, and very difficult to conquer; only experts can swallow him without a severe struggle. A whelk which had accidentally tumbled from a saucer in Camden Town was run over by a van, and it cost the whelk-merchant a week's profits to square the carman for his wheel. It may be remembered that a little while ago, at the Zoological Gardens, an ostrich died in whose stomach were found several pocket-knives, a few keys, some marbles, and a hymn-book. If that ostrich had been given a penn'orth of whelks it would have died sooner.

Perhaps the whelk-stall is not strictly a dining place, even for a poor man, though, indeed, a poor man can get an indigestion there for a penny that will compare favourably with the noblest indigestion of the millionaire. A real dining place, somewhere intermediate between the whelk-stall and the —ah! I very nearly let that advertisement slip—the places where you pay in sovereigns, is the old City chop-house, now very nearly extinct. I am old enough—not so *very* old, though, ma'am—but old enough to remember the chop-house in its early form. There you chose your chop or steak raw. As you entered you faced two vast dishes—sometimes they were wooden trays—each polished to brilliance, and laid out with chops and steaks of every degree of thickness and thinness, fatness and leanness; there was every sort of variety in them except one: the quality was the same for all, and it was the very best. Such chops and steaks are hard to find now, though they *are* to be got. Well, lying by each dish or tray was a fork, or rather a sceptre—a lordly sceptre ending in a prong. You picked up a sceptre and, allowing it to hover gracefully for a moment over the dish while you considered, you drove the prong at last into the chop or steak of your choice; then, with the chop-laden sceptre sloped imposingly before you, rather like a Roman Eagle heading a Legion, you marched up the aisle, between the two rows of high-backed pews where the customers sat, to the blazing grill. Here the cook dexterously deprived you of the chop and took your instructions as to whether you wished it well done or the reverse. This, of course, supposing you were a stranger. He knew the precise turn and touch for every regular customer. So much accomplished, you marched back with your bare sceptre, placed it ready to hand for the next customer, chose your pew, and waited. Your dinner (or your lunch) was the chop or steak, plain potatoes, a hunk of admirable bread, as much cheese as you pleased to cut, and a pint of beer. If you were above beer—few were—you had half a pint of sherry from the wood, and I should think that an order for claret would have caused almost as much consternation in this old chop-house as one

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for whelks at the —— Ah! nearly did it again. Knives, forks, plates, cruet—all were as simple and plain as you like, and all clean enough to make you blink. Mustard was the great condiment; it came in half-pint pots, fresh as the moment, and the customers took it in vast doses. When all was over, you presented the civil waiter with the sum of one penny for himself, and sometimes, if you were more pleased with the chop than usual, you placed a like amount at the disposal of the cook, and you went forth into the street (even the streets of the City were more amusing then) with a great deal of content. And now, as a man who has eaten in all sorts of places, from a whelk-stall to the —— (no, no, I was on guard then), I wish publicly and solemnly to declare that I have never eaten a better meal than one could get any day for a shilling and a few coppers at one of these old chop-houses, where you hunted your dinner in its wild state with a fork, and saw it cooked before your eyes.



"YOU MARCHED UP THE AISLE BETWEEN THE TWO ROWS OF HIGH-BACKED PEWS WHERE THE CUSTOMERS SAT."

There *was* an earlier style of chop-house than this, even—quite the aboriginal sort, I suppose. I can only just remember it as a boy. There the plan was even more elementary—the savagery was put back another age, so to speak. You did not hunt the untamed chop in the artificial enclosure—the park, as you might say—of the chop-house itself; you tracked it down to its native lair in the butcher's shop, and there had it cut to your order. Your prey once captured and securely caged in paper, you carried it to the chop-house, and there had it grilled at a charge of a penny. This, however, was the very early charge, before my time. Later, with the advance of wealth and the growth of luxury and extravagance, you paid twopence for cookery, cruet, knife, fork, and plate. Potatoes, drink, and bread and cheese still further aggravated the ruinous total. There was a narrow court off Throgmorton Street, where a chop-house maintained these ancient principles in the days of my very early youth, having the convenience of a butcher's shop exactly opposite—about five yards off. I remember it because it was in that butcher's shop that my father and I successfully captured two chops, one of which was the only one I ever personally consumed on this ancient British plan; and I wish I were certain of a chop half as good as that one for my lunch to-day. Now, was that in Angel Court or in Copthall Court? I can't be sure—but I think it must have been Angel Court.

Perhaps I was wrong in supposing that the chop-house of this sort was the absolute aboriginal. Possibly at some remote period there may have been a chop-house where you brought your own sheep and had it killed, and paid a penny for the loan of a spade to dig up your potatoes; but that kind of chop-house I do *not* call to mind.

How well I remember many of those mysterious foreign establishments, though, about Soho, where they give you a dinner of ten courses with a bottle of wine and a toothpick for eighteenpence or thereabout! These places may be divided into two classes: the first, the real and genuine wonders, where the courses are not quite so many as I have said, and where the charge is a little more; and the second, the humbugs, kept to entrap the ignorant. Very often a restaurant

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of the first sort passes gradually into the second category. It begins with a small *clientèle* of the artistic and literary class, English and foreign, and it provides a capital little luncheon or dinner, perfectly cooked, and good sound claret or Chianti, at surprisingly low prices. Its customers are few, they know good cookery and good wine, and they form a small coterie or circle. By-and-by they bring their friends, and after a little the secret leaks out and outsiders begin to drop in now and again; then the outsiders increase in numbers and the original customers drop off. And ere long these latter go altogether, having discovered a fresh place as good as No. 1 used to be, and as quiet. As for No. 1, it waxes prosperous, and the proprietor finds that he can presume on his reputation. He screws up his prices and he complicates his menu, at the same time as he screws down the quality of his fare and complicates his claret with things as little like grape-juice as possible. So that in time the place is a mighty property, and utterly "blown upon" for those who know, but swarmed nightly with the would-be knowing who mistake a printed menu they can't understand for a good dinner—which perhaps they couldn't understand either, if they had it.

One of the best and cheapest of these places—it is not good now, though still cheap—was my habitual lunching place fifteen years ago. A Frenchman kept it, and he kept it clean, and he fed you marvellously *à la carte*. You could have soup and nothing else if you chose—which would cost you threepence. It was admirable soup, too—a very different thing from the gruesome extract of stock-pot that costs a shilling in the City dining place. A sole—simply fried, but it takes something like genius to fry a sole as it should be done—was fivepence, always. How this was managed I don't know, unless that excellent Frenchman was dexterous enough to steal his soles ready cooked for each customer; I never quite accepted the superstition prevalent at the time, that he bred them in a private ocean on the roof. So with everything else. By some extraordinary mechanism the process of cooking made things cheap; for raw in the market they would have cost you twice as much. Now, why was that? Cooking things doesn't make them cheap at the——well, you know where I mean. It doesn't even make them cheap at home. If I were to go to my butcher or fishmonger and announce that the articles left in the morning being now cooked, I should be obliged by the return of half the money paid for them, I don't believe I should get it. Somehow, I feel sure that their dull, mechanical minds would fail to grasp the argument. And as to my wine-merchant letting me have claret at tenpence a bottle merely on condition that I drank it before I paid for it, as at the establishment of my friend the Frenchman—well, I can only say that if he ever gave way to such habits he has quite conquered them now.

But nothing could be more illusory than the cheapness of the bad—and popular—Soho dining place. Things are done on the cheap with the most amazing ingenuity. Nothing is wasted—not even the used tooth-picks, I should say. I know they use the butcher's skewers to scrape into horse-radish, and I feel pretty sure that half the asparagus—the half that has no heads—consists of worn-out skewers also, boiled and boiled and served and served again and again with the real asparagus—if it is real asparagus that they buy in tins—till it is unrecognisable as mere timber. The soup, too, is plainly nothing but the greasy hot water in which the plates have been washed. A shovelful of greengrocer's sweepings makes it "Julienne," flour makes it something else, and as for *croûte au pot*, and the little bits of toast in other soups—why, customers leave bits of bread about everywhere. So that there is the advantage of having all the soup in one tub, and all the dirty plates kept compactly in the same receptacle, which is also handy to stand bottles of claret in, which are ordered to be warmed. You will often notice how greasy these bottles seem when brought to table. All the meat tastes the same—like boiled veal hashed in brown grease; but it is not veal. What it is exactly I cannot definitely say, never having been told. But Englishmen as a nation are proverbial admirers of that noble animal the horse, so perhaps it doesn't matter.

But the bad Soho dining place is better than the bad modern dining place in the City. This has every inconvenience of the old chop-house and not one of its excellences. Oh, that bad City dining place! Sometimes the proprietor is Italian, and you can always ascertain if this is the case by smelling the food, to which Italian proprietorship always communicates a peculiar rankness not easy to describe, but instantly recognisable if you have run against it once. These places usually have cellar-gratings in the pavement, and

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"THE BAD—AND POPULAR—SOHO DINING PLACE."

through these gratings a certain atmosphere rises. I have heard it conjectured that this atmosphere might be cut with a knife; but I have never tried, not having a knife I cared to risk. If I really wished to cut it I should try a saw—one belonging to somebody else. The cellar-gratings, you will observe, are firmly bolted into the stone; nothing else would keep them there. This atmosphere, against which any innocent citizen with a wife and family dependent on him may dash himself unaware, forms one of the greatest perils of the London streets. It is as bad as the soup inside the shop, and a great deal thicker.

The soup, by the way, is always of one sort in these places. It could easily be made by anybody with a barrel of bones and fat and the requisite patience to keep the contents ripening for six months before making the soup. When it is made it is any soup you please. Put it in a plate with a lump of bone in the middle, and it is ox-tail. Fish out the bone and substitute a lump of gristle, and it is mock-turtle. Throw away the gristle and pitch in cayenne pepper till the diner's hair rises on end and his eyes stand out like hat-pegs, and it is mulligatawny; and so on.

The potatoes are of one sort, too—the sort that when boiled present on one side the tender, delicate hue of a costermonger's black eye. There is a secret method of cooking them, too, known only in these places, whereby they are rendered more durable than when raw, and are given the general characteristics and appearance of fine old mottled soap. The general one-sortedness of these establishments extends also to the waiters—and their clothes. It is quite plain that they are not born in those dress clothes, else some of them would fit. But I am convinced that they put them on in early life and never take them off again, even to sleep. And just as the waiters keep the same clothes all their lives, so these dining places keep the same waiters; though I once did hear of one being dismissed who was suspected of washing his hands.

But come, let us get to cheaper—and cheerfuller—dining places. Did you ever dine at a "stodge-shop"? Cabmen used to dine at stodge-shops before the time of cabmen's shelters. The stodge-shop is to some extent eclipsed and pushed aside nowadays by the flaming sausage "emporiums" with a sign of a galloping pig, and, as chief advertisement, a sizzle and a smell of onions that penetrates the very bricks in the next street. The stodge-shop of old relied for its attraction

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not on a smell of onions, but on a great display of steam. It had a sort of window-seat of tin, with oval hollows all over it, each to accommodate a joint or pudding. Near the witching hour of noon these joints and puddings would appear, and, gracious heavens, how they would steam! A leg of pork here, a lump of beef there, a shoulder of mutton farther along, puddings all over the place, all steaming like forty washing days. And the amazing thing was that, the longer the joints stayed and the more they were cut and sliced away, the more they steamed! A boiled leg of pork would sink and shrink under the carving-knife, would show more and more of its foundation of bone, and, presumably, grow cooler and cooler, but with everlasting courage it still steamed the more furiously; till at last, after a busy hour, a mere bone would remain, steaming volumes. And when the bone itself was taken away the tin tray would steam still—unless somebody below turned off the supply in the service-pipe at the correct moment. The stodge-shop dinner was good in its way, but a trifle rough. None of your money went in refinements—serviettes, for instance, or salt-spoons. You got it in solid beef or pork, cut thick, with plenty of fat; you got it in solid, pallid pudding, with a lonesome currant at intervals, that seemed to have gone astray on its journey to some other pudding; you got it in carrots, turnips, and potatoes, a trifle uneven in the cooking, perhaps, but solid as the rest, and filling for the money. You got it, sometimes, even in the literature adorning the window. At the moment I can recollect but one specimen of this literature, a noble burst of poetry that ran thus:—

We treats you well
And serves you quick,
And never forgets
To cut it thick.



"THEY ARE NOT BORN IN THOSE DRESS CLOTHES."

But there was many another lyric of a quality equally stirring.

I fear I am not over-enthusiastic in the matter of the stodge-shop—I like best to recall its exterior aspect and its mysterious steam. Internally (in a double sense) I found it a little overpowering. The stewed-eel shop I like a little better, though stewed eels I am not very fond of, having frequently seen eels alive in—well, in other circumstances, less tempting. But there is a pleasant and business-like cleanliness about the stewed-eel shop that rather pleases me. "Jossop" is the name given to the gelatinous mass that results from the stewing of eels, in the neighbourhoods where its consumption at shop-counters is in favour. The word is said to be derived, by a poetical inspiration, from the sound that salutes the ear when a long row of customers is busy, each with his spoon and basin of stewed eels. Jossop is nutritious, but gluey; indeed, it is recommended for that very reason in the inscriptions which announce that it "Sticks to your ribs," and that "This is the stuff for broken ribs, a penny a basin!"

Then there is the pie-shop; long may it wave! It is one of the most ancient of our eating institutions, and the mutton-pies of London have been a thing of mystery long before the trouser-buttons were found in the sausages of Mr. Sam Weller's anecdote. Personally, I love mystery, and I hope that no meddlesome official—food inspector, or what not—will ever lift the crust which conceals the secret of the penny meat-pie. As it is, the scope of conjecture for the imaginative remains as wide as ever, and the customer's thoughts as he consumes his pie are directed into useful channels of comparative and speculative natural history: a thing which every promoter of secondary education will wish to encourage.

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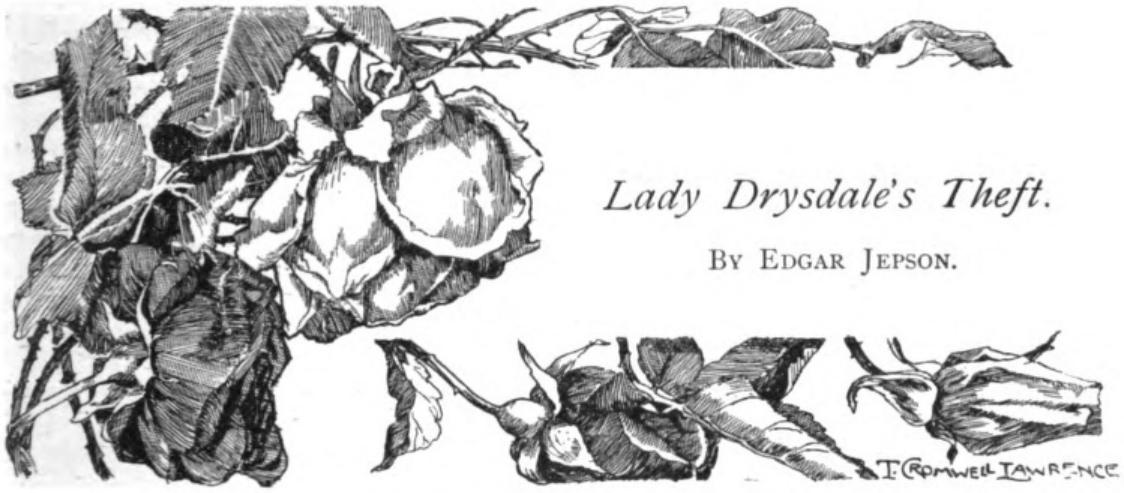
But there are dining places, cheap and dear, outside London, though you might not think so, to read what I have been writing. A sort that I remember with pleasure is the Dublin cockle-shop. Being Irish, it is called a cockle-shop because you go there to eat prawns; and Dublin prawns, being Irish, too, are a sort of small lobster or crayfish. Now, I believe that in Dublin the cockle-shops are not regarded as dining places, strictly speaking; but when I was in Dublin I dined, supped, lunched, and stayed all day in a cockle-shop, and that is what I advise others to do, keeping strictly to Dublin prawns and Dublin stout.

The cheapest dining place I ever heard of in Paris was one in which for the sum of one single penny — ten centimes—you could obtain all the excitement of gambling for your dinner, all the pride of winning it by a feat of dexterity, and, perhaps, the dinner itself. By way of receipt for the penny paid in advance you were given a fork with which you advanced to the side of a vast caldron, full of savoury liquor, in which all sorts of things were stewing — at any rate, so you were told: fowls, joints, rabbits, ribs of beef—anything you like to imagine, all bobbing and tumbling under the surface. You flung your fork dart-wise into the broth, and anything you could stick it firmly into was your own. If you missed—as most people did—you got nothing but a very inadequate plateful of the broth. The customers came in flocks, and flung in so many forks which didn't come out again that the broth became, in the main, a sort of fork soup, and the proprietor made a very respectable little fortune.



"YOU FLUNG YOUR FORK DART-WISE INTO THE BROTH."

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Lady Drysdale's Theft.

By Edgar Jepson.

THE two women were dressed in black of a very different quality; and the woman with the baby was a widow. She wore the cheap black, but the baby's clothes did not match it—they were white clothes with black bows about them, and the stuff was fine. He was a clean and rosy, fair-haired baby, accepting everything with unwondering blue eyes, since everything alike passed understanding; but he drew his mother's attention to things of interest, the red automatic machines and the white horses drawing trucks in a siding, with a waggle of his arm and an inarticulate, but quite comprehensible, murmur on two notes, a low note and then a higher, prolonged, "Ah—eh—h—h!" His mother gave him but a distracted attention; for the most part her sad eyes gazed down the vista of the railway at a vision of a South African battle-field. When at his murmur she turned her face to him, it lost its sad dreaminess and shone with the divine passion; she almost smiled when she spoke to him.

Lady Drysdale watched the baby with eyes which never left him, eyes filled with the last covetous hunger; sometimes there gleamed in them an envy very near a veritable hatred of his mother. Now and then she twisted her hands in a very passion of greed. Twice she made a step towards him and checked herself, staring round a little wildly. In the violence of her desire she actually dared not trust herself to speak to him. Lost in her unhappiness, his mother saw nothing of it.

Presently the train came in, and Lady Drysdale watched the mother climb into a third-class compartment "for ladies only," and bidding the wondering porter, who had opened the door of a first-class compartment for her, bring in her wraps and dressing-bag, climbed in after them and, with a happy sigh, sat down in the corner farthest from the mother and child. The train started. The mother sat in a spiritless dejection, holding the baby so that he could stand and look out of the window. Now and again, when he drew her attention to something of interest with more than usual emphasis, she roused herself to talk to him awhile, but she soon fell back into her unhappy reverie. Lady Drysdale's gaze never left him, and once or twice he looked at her with familiar eyes, as though he knew her quite well, and every look thrilled her.

Then she played her trump-card: she took her dressing-bag down from the rack and, opening it, revealed the shining row of silver-stoppered bottles.

The baby had turned at her movement, and at the shining sight his eyes opened very wide; he murmured "Ah—eh—h—h!"

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"HE BEGAN TO STRUGGLE AGAINST HIS MOTHER'S ARM"

and began to struggle against his mother's arm. She looked round, saw the open dressing-bag, and held him tighter.

"Ah—eh—h—h! Ah—eh—h—h!" he said. His lower lip went down, and he burst into a roar of anguished disappointment.

"Oh, let him come! Let him come!" cried Lady Drysdale, eagerly.

"He will bother you," said his mother, reluctantly.

"No, no," said Lady Drysdale, earnestly.

His mother set him on the floor, and he rushed wildly down the carriage and tumbled up against Lady Drysdale's knee. Her hands shook so that she could scarcely lift him on to the seat beside her; he nearly dived into the bag in his eagerness to handle the bright treasures. She gave him bottle after bottle, until he wallowed in bottles, clamouring his shrill joy. His mother watched him a little while, and then fell back into her unhappiness. Lady Drysdale took him on to her knee, a bottle in either hand, and he tried to explain to her, in his inarticulate fashion, the intimate connection of these shining things with the ultimate mysteries; life and education had blunted her understanding.

Presently it was time for him to be fed, and his mother took a bottle of some baby food out of her shabby little bag, poured some into a mug, invested him with a napkin, and fed him. After it he ate a sponge-cake and a banana—travelling had not spoiled his appetite. Lady Drysdale took him on her knee and gave him the banana in bites of the proper size. When, after being filled, he went to sleep in Lady Drysdale's arms, with the freemasonry of mothers the two women began to exchange confidences. They cried over the death of Lady Drysdale's little boy, whom she had lost just nineteen months before at the exact age of the sleeping child, and who, she said again and again, was extraordinarily like him, of the same colouring, the same eyes, and the same ways. Then they cried over the death of the widow's husband, an Imperial Yeoman killed in South Africa. At last the baby's mother was moved by Lady Drysdale's sympathy to confide to her her horrible dread of the future. She was on her way to London to live with her people; London did not suit the boy, and she was tortured by the fear of his pining away there. Moreover, her stepmother did not like her, and hated children; she would be unkind to him. Lady Drysdale pressed him closer to her, and schemes for saving him began to float through her mind.

She was silent, thinking hard. Suddenly there came a grinding, grating jar, and the carriage swayed and jerked. Lady Drysdale was conscious of curling instinctively round the child to shield him, of being flung here and there; then came a great crash, and all was still. She was roused from the shock by the screams of the child, and she found herself lying, still curled round him, on the top of his mother. The carriage seemed to be on its side, and they lay in a heap across the lower windows of it. Shaken and dazed, she drew herself off the child's mother, and began hurriedly, with trembling fingers, to

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feel his head and arms and legs and ribs: none of his bones were broken, and he screamed with a reassuring vigour. She set him down and turned to his mother. She lay, deathly white, in a huddled heap. Lady Drysdale tried to lift her into an easier position; her head hung limp on her shoulders; she put her hand behind it, and found the back of it all crushed. She wiped her hand on the cushion, and thrust it into the injured woman's dress over her heart; there was not a beat.

In the first shock of horror she was stricken with panic, and, catching up the child, in a furious desire to be out of this chamber of death, she screamed again and again for help. Presently two men looked down through the windows above her head and opened the door. She thrust up the child into their hands, and when they had set it down they caught her wrists and began to haul her up. Using the supports of the rack as steps, she relieved them of some of her weight and was dragged out. She sank down sobbing beside the child; and the two men, bidding her not give way, went on to the next compartments to haul more people out.

She soon recovered enough to start soothing the child. At the sight of some blood on his mouth her heart sank with the fear of internal injury. It was only a cut lip. The soothing him composed her, and she began to think clearly, gazing round at the scene. The train had run off the line; the engine, wantoning in its freedom, had ploughed its way up to an elm tree and tried to butt it down. Three carriages lay on their sides; their passengers were hobbling or crawling about on the upper sides of them; some were still dragging people up out of the compartments. Three carriages still stood on the metals, and the two others stood in a crooked slant on the embankment. The passengers from these were streaming about the fallen ones. The air was filled with a mingled clamour; the engine in a cloud of steam was sizzling shrilly; the passengers were shouting inquiries, suggestions about getting down, and theories of the cause of the catastrophe at one another; women were in hysterics.

It seemed to Lady Drysdale that she and the boy might have been in a desert for all the notice anyone took of them; and, frightened by the din, he clung to her, clutching her tightly, his little body shaken by great sobs after his crying. She had but realized their loneliness when a sudden idea sprang up in her mind and filled it on the instant with a very rage of possession. Why should she not take the boy? She began quickly to consider the matter and her chances of getting him. His father was dead. . . . His mother was dead. . . . No one wanted him. . . . At any rate, his mother had made it plain to her that his grandfather and grandmother, who alone had a right to him, did not want him. . . . They would neglect or misuse him. . . . She wanted him. . . . Oh, how she wanted him! . . . He was the living image of her dead child. . . . Heaven had given him to her instead of her lost darling. . . . Besides, she had a right to him, for she had saved his life. . . . And, again, she could give him the proper care and love. . . . She would take him! . . . Right or wrong, she would take him!

In this cursory and disjointed fashion she settled the moral question, and turned to the practical matter of stealing him. She looked round carefully and, under the impulse of her purpose, stealthily. The passengers were still busy with their injuries and theories of the cause of the catastrophe. She made up her mind to sever all connection between herself and the wrecked train, and she scanned the country. A couple of hundred yards from the line a high road ran parallel with it; beyond rose a great slope of woods and fields, up the slope ran a white footpath. The slope seemed familiar to her; at any rate, her path with the child lay over it. Somewhere on the other side was a railway other than the North-Western which would carry them to London.

She went to the edge of the carriage roof, called imperiously to an excited old gentleman, and handed the boy down to him. He was too excited to refuse or even protest. He held him gingerly, gasping. She lowered herself over the edge of the carriage and, getting a foot-hold on the rim of the lamp-hole, jumped from it to the ground and relieved him of his burden.

"This is the result of carelessness—gross carelessness!" stuttered the old gentleman. "I tell you, madam, they have neglected to look after the metals. I call it perfectly——"

"Where are we?" said Lady Drysdale, cutting him short.

"They tell me we are two miles north of King's Langley. Such wanton carelessness is quite inconceivable! I can't understand——"

She turned her back on him and walked alongside the fallen carriages towards the end of the field. She knew where she was; the

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"SHE CALLED IMPERIOUSLY TO AN EXCITED OLD GENTLEMAN."

winter before her marriage her people had been kept in town and she had come down here twice a week to hunt. Over the slope, ten miles across country, she could strike the Metropolitan at Rickmansworth and take a train to Baker Street. No one could connect her and the boy with the wrecked train if they landed in London at Baker Street.

Whenever they passed one of the noisy, argumentative groups the baby clutched her and nestled his face against her cheek. Every time he did it he set her heart hammering against her ribs and hardened her in her purpose. She turned up the hedgerow towards the high-road, climbed over three fences, and came into it opposite the footpath up the slope. She crossed the stile and began to mount it quickly, casting timorous glances behind her to see if she were followed; once she thought that she saw people pointing at her from the wrecked train. She set her teeth, hugged the boy to her, and pressed on the quicker. She could not feel her bruises for the joy of having him.

She walked for nearly an hour, then she had to stop; a baby of nineteen months is no light weight, and for all that she was strong and in good condition, her arms and legs and back were aching. She climbed over a stile into a meadow, far over the brow of the slope; set him down, threw herself down beside him, and abandoned herself to her joy in him. She hugged him, kissed him, nuzzled him, laughed over him, and cried over him. He took her tenderness in very good part and made no complaint; indeed, when at last she lay still, he clambered about her with chuckles of infinite delight; always he looked at her with familiar eyes.

Presently he turned his attention to Nature, and made little rushes at flowers near them, invariably falling flat on the object of his desire. He had been trained to bravery; he did not howl at a tumble; he only grunted and pulled himself up again. He knew, too, what to do with a flower when he had plucked it: he sniffed at it. She watched him in an absorbed, unfathomable joy; the intolerable hunger which had gnawed her was blunted.

She was loth to tear herself away from her delightful watching; but at last she rose and moved slowly down the path, letting him toddle before her, or leading him by the hand. He would go a little way with thoughtful dignity, pointing out things of interest with a waggling arm, and saying, "Ah—eh—h—h!"; then he would make a wild rush at a flower, and she would save him from the ditch. She walked in a vast content, drinking in with greedy eyes and ears his every look, movement, and murmur. For the first time since her loss the sun was really shining, and she heard the birds singing.

The path ended in a lane running downwards between high hedges; and on the instant, with a cry of delight, the boy sat down in the thick dust and began to play with it. With this sport to his hand there was no keeping him on his feet, and she

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picked him up and carried him. The lane ran into another lane running along the bottom of a valley, and turning to the left she plodded steadily on. At about four she came into a small village, and was very glad to rest her weary body in the parlour of the little inn. She fed the boy on warm milk and bread and butter; and it was such a delight to her that she could have wished him to go on eating and drinking for ever. The landlady came in once or twice and called him a pretty dear and a fine child; Lady Drysdale resented her interest, but she was careful to gratify her rustic curiosity with a story of how she had brought the boy down from London to Rickmansworth to spend a day in the country, and had wandered with him hither. While she took her own tea the boy enjoyed a splendid time with a large cat—the cat rather endured than enjoyed it. After tea she played with him a little; then, since the landlady could not persuade the baker, who owned the only trap in the village, to drive her to Rickmansworth, she took the boy and went to him herself.



"SHE WATCHED HIM IN AN ABSORBED, UNFATHOMABLE JOY."

There are not many men who could refuse Lady Drysdale anything in their power to give her, if she put herself about to coax it out of them; certainly the simple but grumpy baker was not one of them; and in twenty minutes she was being jolted along to the station. She had to wait there but a very few minutes for a train, and reached London at six.

She changed her cab in Oxford Street, that there might be no tracing her from Baker Street to Grosvenor Square; let herself into her house, and gained her room without meeting a servant, so that none of them could have told exactly at what hour she came home. But as soon as she had taken off her hat and the boy's hat and coat she rang for her maid, and after telling her that she had adopted the boy, a Berkshire child, that she might spread that quite inaccurate information, she ordered her to set the servants to work to bring down the cot and baby's bath from upstairs, and to send out for baby food. The boy appeared pleased with the pretty room, and showed his approval by tearing the draping round the toilet-table, in the intervals of waggling his arm and murmuring "Ah—eh—h—h!" at all the bright things on it.

Lady Drysdale prepared his food herself, and then she set about giving him his bath. In the middle of it the fancy came to her that he was her little dead baby come back to her; he was so like him, not only in his little body, but in his ways of splashing the water, of playing with the soap and the sponge, of crowing his delight; besides, never had he looked at her as at a stranger. She thrust the fancy away from her, but it would come back. When she had fed him and rocked him to sleep, and sat watching him, she played with the fancy. Could such things be? Why could not such things be? As her baby died, this one had been born. The tearing clutch of little dead hands was loosening from her heart.

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Presently she heard her husband come in and up the stairs, not three steps at a time, as he had used to come on the chance of finding their boy still awake, but slowly. He opened the door and looked in, and at the sight of the cot he started, and stared with all his eyes. She beckoned him, and, coming softly, he stood by the cot staring down at the sleeping child in a bewildered fascination.

"Good heavens!" he said, softly. "It's the boy!"

In a low voice she told him of her theft and her precautions. He listened in a dull wonder, staring at the child. When she had done, he said nothing; he only gazed and gazed. She shook his arm in a feverish impatience, and said in a husky, grasping voice, "I must have him, Dick! I must—I must! I tell you he is mine!"



"'GOOD HEAVENS!' HE SAID, SOFTLY. 'IT'S THE BOY!'"

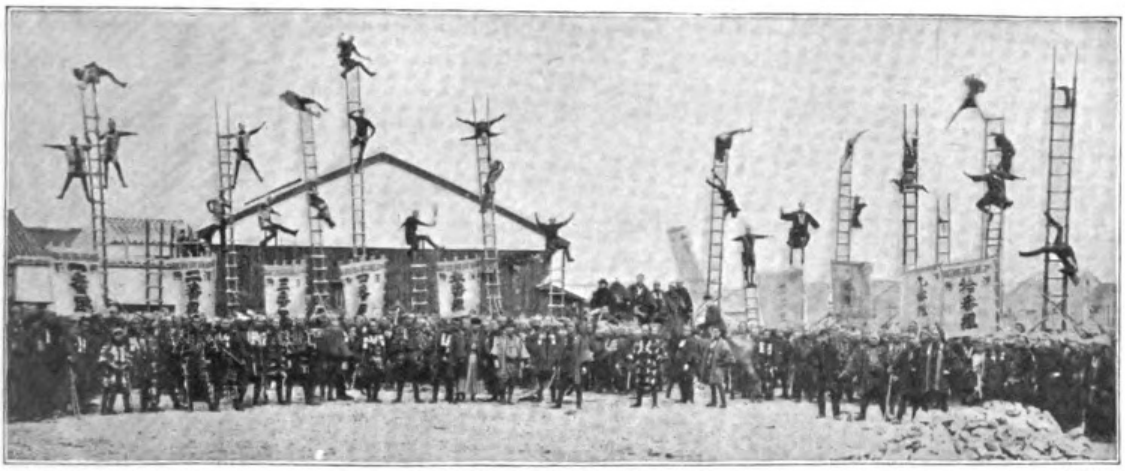
"By the Lord, you shall!" said Lord Drysdale, waking up.

The next day Lady Drysdale and the boy were on their way to Munich. Her husband stayed behind to watch events. The baby's unfortunate mother was identified by her stepmother, and when that lady found no baby awaiting her care she was exceedingly guarded in her inquiries about him. In the end she seemed to take it very easily for granted that he had fallen into charitable hands, and even seemed pleased to be rid of the responsibility. She told the railway officials that the child could not have been travelling with his mother. Lord Drysdale contrived to see her—a thin-lipped, narrow-faced, small-eyed woman; and the sight of her face sent him to Munich justified, in his own eyes, in keeping the child out of her clutches. The boy, with a waggling arm and his murmur of "Ah-eh-h-h!" points out to his new parents things of interest in the European capitals; soon he will have grown out of the recognition of anyone who knew him in England. His new parents are devoted to him It is wonderful, almost past believing, how he has filled the gap in their lives: possibly it is the likeness. Lady Drysdale's feelings about him are very curious: often she tells herself that he is her dead baby come back to her. Perhaps she believes it—a mother's heart is, after all, the mystery of mysteries.

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Fighting Fire.

By Jeremy Broome.



From a] A JAPANESE FIRE-BRIGADE DRILL. *[Photo.*

A RECENT disastrous fire in London, at which several lives were lost, aroused the public to the value of modern life-saving fire apparatus, and brought upon the London County Council an onslaught of public criticism regarding the antiquity of the apparatus now in use by the London Fire Brigade. It is probable that much of this criticism was unduly bitter, and that the equipment of the London Brigade is fairly satisfactory for all practical purposes, but that in many ways this equipment is old-fashioned is hardly to be denied. The fault is merely in the slowness of those in power to adopt the latest innovations in fire-fighting, some of which are illustrated in the following pages. They deal mostly with the appliances used in the United States, where fire-fighting has received the closest study, and where nearly every new idea is tested and, in cases of successful tests, immediately adopted.

Times have indeed changed since the above photograph was taken. It represents a Japanese fire department in one of their ladder-drills in days long ago—how long ago we dare not say—and shows little else except the ladders and the remarkable agility of the firemen in their ordinary drill. It carries us back to those very happy days when the lives and homes of the people were dependent on a few men with ladders and buckets of water, who, skilful as they were with both, could rarely cope with a real conflagration. They were useful enough for a small "blaze," as the reporter loves to call it, but in front of "devouring flames" they were as helpless as Canute before the approaching waves.

Modern fire-fighting is almost a profession. Ladders still play their part, and water is ever useful; but to this equipment must now be added the latest and most scientifically-constructed appliances, expert training, and brains. They may stick to their old-fashioned methods in the East, and reap the benefit in those destructive fires which are periodically reported to have swept whole towns and villages away; but in the Western countries the art of fire-fighting is the subject of continued study, and every new device in life-saving or property-salvage is keenly tested, adopted, and copied far and wide. Just as every minute or second is valuable to the fireman when rushing to a fire, so is each tool of his trade valuable the more scientific and modern it may be.

The necessity of knowing what to do in case of fire is well recognised by many schools in the United States, and so-called "fire-drills" are of almost daily occurrence. The school-children are trained by those in charge in such a way that, on a given signal (as if a real fire had broken out), the pupils arise, collect together, and in the briefest possible time quietly depart from the school-quarters to a place of safety. It is not, however, our intention here to dwell upon the advantages of such drills —which tend to decrease the possibilities of panic when a real fire breaks out—but

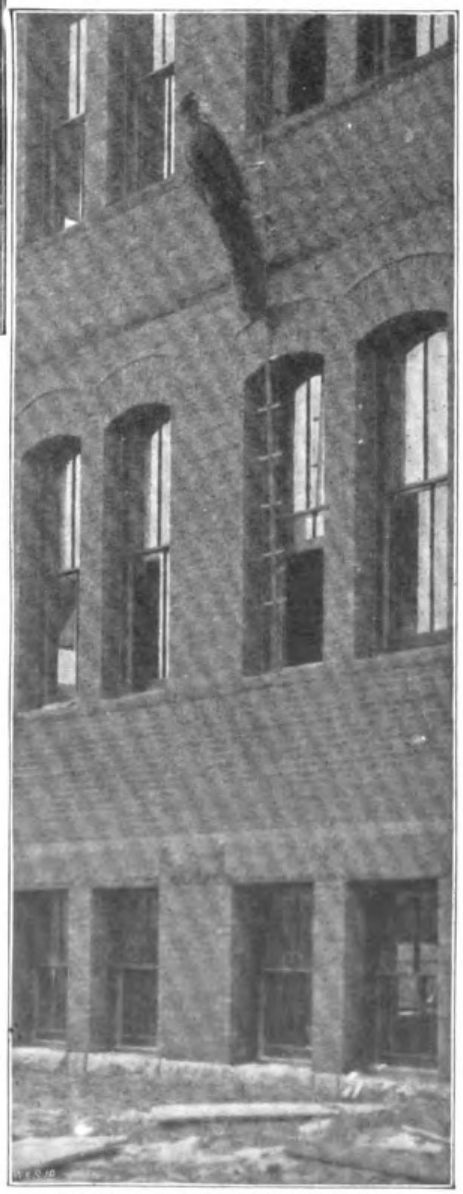
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RAISING THE SCALING-LADDER.
From a Photo. by Stebbins, Boston.

merely to point out that several schools in the United States, having proved the value of such instruction, have now gone a step farther in the right direction, and have begun to train their pupils in the manipulation of modern appliances for life-saving in case of fire. Several of our illustrations, for instance, show the work now being done daily in the Cambridge Manual Training School—a work so successful as to have already achieved the honour of wide imitation. It was introduced into the school at the outset as a voluntary element, mainly for the sake of the physical exercise and recreation which it furnished; but its greater usefulness as an educational force was so quickly recognised in actual practice that it is now required of all the boys attending the school, except in the cases of those who are physically unable to take it.

Every part of this fire-drill is under the personal supervision of some instructor, who has a thorough knowledge of all its details, and he is held responsible for the discipline of the boys and their officers, and for the safety of all during the drill. As a preliminary, the pupils are given a course of lectures explaining the use of a knowledge of fire-prevention and fire-fighting, the present methods employed and the improvements needed. They are then given a systematic course of exercises designed to supply a practical knowledge of the methods of the fireman. These exercises include practice with the life-net; the use of the life-belt and life-harness; practice with the life-line gun; the erection and use of ladders; the handling of different forms of fire-hose, including coupling, laying the line, and carrying the lines through buildings and up ladders; and a variety of other duties, including the handling of fire-extinguishers and other forms of emergency apparatus.



PRACTICE WITH THE SCALING-LADDER.
From a Photo. by Stebbins, Boston.

To take the place of a three-story building the boys are provided with a drill-tower 40ft. high, shown in an illustration on page 204. This is equipped as a three-story building, with stairways, window-casings, etc., and possesses exterior shelves, from which jumps varying from 8ft. to 30ft. may be made into the life-net. Overhanging timbers are arranged at the top to support heavy iron rings, to which ropes may be fastened for practice with the life-belt.

The manuals of the fire departments in many American cities vary but little in general character, and each is carefully followed by members of the brigade at drill. Security and success lie in the care and expertness with which instructions are followed. In Chicago, where the drills have reached a high state of proficiency, there are seven different styles of drill, which may briefly

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be enumerated as follows: First, the ground-drill, in which men and ladders are placed in position preparatory to scaling; second, the ladder-drill, ascending and descending; third, the time-drill; fourth, standing on sill, ascending and descending; fifth, straddling sill, ascending and descending; sixth, ascending in an oblique direction; and seventh, rope and life-line exercise.

Probably the most important piece of life-saving apparatus ever invented for the use of firemen is the scaling-ladder shown in the illustrations. It was devised as a quick and easy means of escape for people in danger at high distances, and is made with a single rod of well-seasoned wood, with short cross-pieces of wood mortised in and passing through it. These cross-pieces are braced with iron brackets. At the top end is a steel hook, 3ft. long, with teeth to prevent slipping from a window-sill. The most curious thing about the ladder, and the one that arouses a queer sensation in the breast of him who first climbs the ladder, is that it sways and bends, although it is strong enough to bear the weight of two or three men.



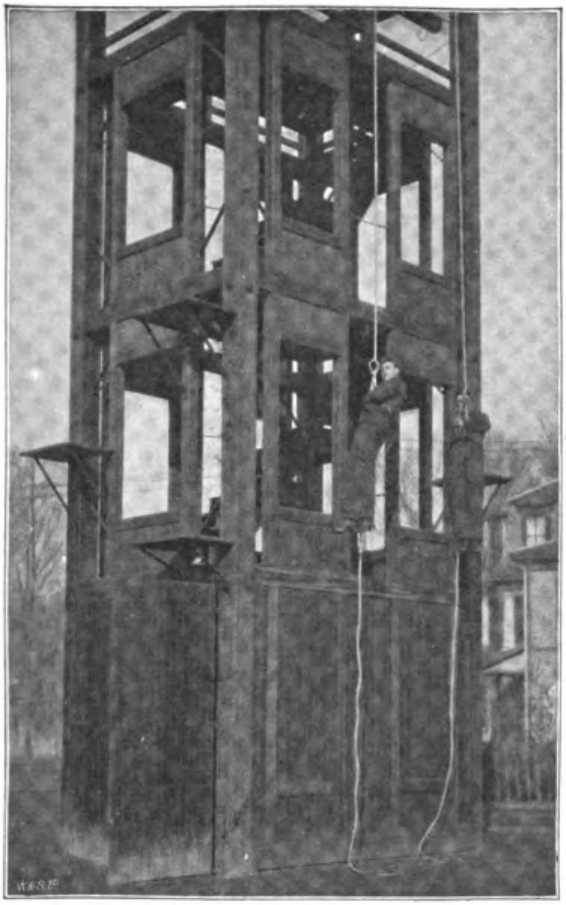
THE USE OF THE LIFE-LINE.
From a Photo. by Stebbins, Boston.

The single scaling-ladder plays a conspicuous part in the most important drill known to modern fire departments, namely, "chain-building" with scaling-ladders. It is said that expert chain-builders can mount high structures and begin their work of rescue before an extension ladder can be put in place. The method of work is as follows: The first fireman, on the ground, hooks his ladder into a window above and quickly ascends. When near the top he stops and fastens his "belt-snap" to the end of the ladder. The second fireman then hands his ladder to No. 1, who hooks it to a window above and then ascends, followed by No. 2. No. 3 then hands a ladder to No. 2, who in turn hands it to No. 1, and by this steady manipulation of, and a continued ascent on, the newly-placed ladders the roof is reached. The "belt-snap," which is shown in one of our illustrations on the previous page, secures the climber to his ladder at a point where his arms may be free for work, and the descent is merely the reverse of the ascending movements.

Life-lines are intended for life-saving purposes, and according to one manual "should always be carried when entering a burning building from the ladders." Great care is taken in laying the coil upon the floor to make sure that the loop end is on the upper side, in order that the rope may run freely. Then, placing the loop under the arms of the person to be lowered, with the noose to the back, the fireman takes three turns of the line around the snap-hook at his belt in such a manner as to bring the lower end of the line to the left side of the hook and the upper end to the right side. This method of winding the line upon the hook prevents the hook from breaking and the line from becoming detached. Great care is taken to keep the line tight between the person who is being lowered and the "snap"; and the fireman has to be careful not to allow his fingers to get caught between the rope and the snap.

In many fires the fireman has to lower

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THE USE OF THE LIFE-BELT.
From a Photo. by Stebbins, Boston.

himself by the life-line. He does so by fastening one end of the line to some strong object, and then, tossing the rest of the line from the window, takes three turns of the line on his snap-hook, passes out of the window, and goes down the rope, taking great care, meanwhile, not to get his hands involved in the turns of the line. The illustration on the previous page shows the descent of the life-line by three men, and the care—and, at the same time, the security—with which it is accomplished may be easily imagined. By the use of a gun the life-line is sometimes carried to the tops of, and over, high buildings. The projectile of the gun carries with it a coil of string which is hurled upwards, the life-line being then attached to the string and hauled up to any point desired.

The use of the life-net is most dramatic, and when it is in use at fires it always attracts great attention from the crowd. It has, moreover, been the means of saving thousands of lives. The net is strongly made of interlaced ropes, and is about 20ft. in circumference. Eighteen or twenty men may be needed in its manipulation, and each man, standing with his head well thrown back and his left foot slightly advanced, so as to preserve equilibrium, grips the heavy outer rope tightly, and awaits the descent of the falling body. Down comes the jumper, a rebound from the net, and the jumper is safe on the ground.

It is said that a jump from the first or second story of a building is an easy thing to a fireman in one of their regular drills, but it tries the courage even of the best to jump from the fourth story. There is, it may be added, a peculiar art in holding the life-net, which can only be properly acquired by one who has himself taken the leap. If the net-holders brace themselves back too hard the force of the falling body may break their fingers. Again, if the net is held too tightly, the jumper may rebound so



From a Photo. by] THE USE OF THE LIFE-LINE. *[Stebbins, Boston.*

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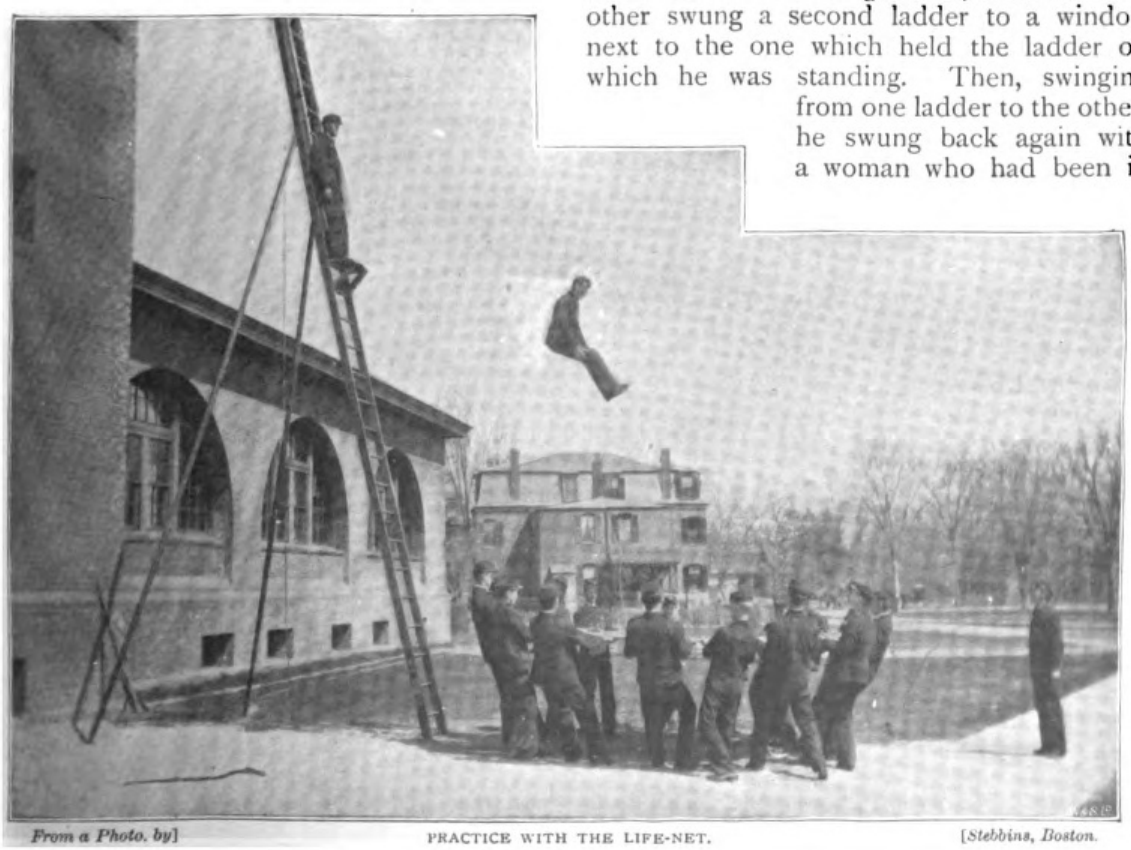
quickly from it as to break an arm or fracture a skull.

The various drills mentioned in the foregoing paragraphs are taxing both to brain and body, and a man who can successfully perform all of the work demanded may be said to have reached the standard of expertness and fearlessness which is the aim of every fireman worthy of the name. The "ground-drill" merely gives the men facility in handling the ladders. The "time-drill" increases general quickness in execution. In the drill called "standing on the sill," two men ascend to the first window of a building with one ladder. No. 1 immediately enters the window by straddling the sill. No. 2 follows, takes a standing position on the ledge outside, and is held there by No. 1, who has a grip on his companion's snap-hook. No. 2 then mounts the ladder which he has raised to the next window, and No. 1 follows and stands on the sill, being held there by No. 2. His companion now lifts the ladder to the next story and mounts, followed by No. 2. So it goes until the top is reached.

"Straddling the sill" is a drill in which one fireman with a single ladder begins at the base of a building, and with a single ladder climbs from window to window by sheer skill and endurance until the top is reached. In order that he may have room to straddle on the left he hooks his ladder into the right-hand corner of the sill, and steadies his body and balances himself by pressing his left leg against the wall inside the building. His hands are thus free to raise the ladder to the window above. Anyone who witnesses the drill may marvel at the dexterity with which it is done, but few, except those who have done it, can know how exhausting it is. It is the terror of the new recruit.

The oblique ascent is rarely required at fires, but no fireman neglects this important drill. Many who have been at fires may have noted how a great volume of smoke sometimes pours out of a window directly over the head of an ascending fireman. At such a moment it becomes necessary for the fireman to ascend to some window at the right or left of that above him. This is the "oblique ascent," or "ascending echelon," as it is sometimes called, and owing to the "swinging-off" movement required to gain the window obliquely above it, the drill is very dangerous and exacting.

In the terrible Windsor Hotel fire in New York City the swinging ladder feat was well exemplified. One of the firemen clung with one hand to a scaling-ladder, and with the other swung a second ladder to a window next to the one which held the ladder on which he was standing. Then, swinging from one ladder to the other, he swung back again with a woman who had been in



From a Photo. by] PRACTICE WITH THE LIFE-NET. *[Stebbins, Boston.*

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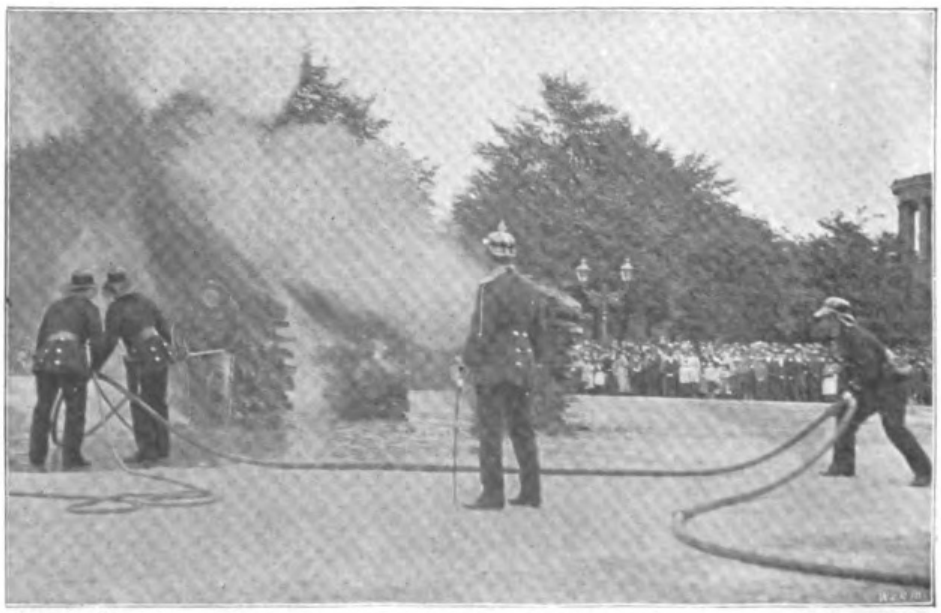
the fourth story of the hotel. It was a deed of heroism, and many deeds like it remain as yet unwritten.

The life-saving drill is a product of the early eighties. In 1882 the burning of several large buildings in New York and Chicago, and the loss of life which resulted, drew general attention to the needs of fire departments. Inventors hurried to meet the demands, and their offers were encouraged. Ex-Chief Bonner, of the New York fire department, made a tour and inspected apparatus from all quarters of the globe. He brought the scaling-ladder from St. Louis, and the life-net quickly followed. Then came the life-belt (shown in one of our illustrations), which is made of a heavy strap with a long snaffle, and is used in holding the firemen on their scaling-ladders. The introduction of all this important apparatus necessitated the introduction of the drills, now so important a feature of regular departmental work in all large American cities.

Each day brings with it some new "wrinkle" for use in fighting flames, and the prime object of all the new ideas is either to make the fireman's calling less hazardous to himself or to enhance his efficiency as a life or property saver. One of the latest ideas is that of the "light engine," which, by means of a searchlight that will throw its beams over a wide area, will eliminate one of the greatest dangers to the fireman, namely, darkness at night. Again, there is the "life-saving cage," which is run up the side of a ladder in order that panic-stricken or disabled persons may safely be brought down from burning buildings. Another valuable contrivance is the "smoke-helmet," used by firemen in places so filled with smoke that breathing without the use of the helmet would be impossible. The eyes of the helmet are made of strong isinglass, protected externally by wire, and the air is supplied from a light nickel reservoir, carried at the back of the helmet, and constantly kept charged with compressed air. At the regulation pressure of 80lb. the helmet will carry enough air to supply a man for several hours.

It is to be hoped that the near future will witness the establishment of regular schools for the technical study of fire-extinguishment, in which anyone who cares to make that subject his life-work may gain a liberal education.

One of New York's well-known fire experts, Mr. Simon Brentano, has already proposed the establishment of such an institution, and in an address, which he delivered some years ago, at the annual meeting in Milwaukee of the National Association of Fire Engineers, he showed the need of a school of fire-extinguishment, and expressed a hope that those in charge of large industrial plants and of valuable property could be taught efficiency in the use of the stationary appliances that were usually present, and so co-operate with the regular fire department, instead of being a detriment to them. The idea at that time gained the immediate support of manufacturers and other business men, to say nothing of the valuable support given by trained firemen, such as the chiefs and ex-chiefs of many fire departments throughout the country.



From a Photo. by] AN EXPERIMENT WITH THE SMOKE-HELMET IN BERLIN. *[Kuhn, Berlin.*

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Notable Australian Batsmen.

By C. B. Fry.

THE elder Bannerman was called "the Grace of Australia," but the nearest counterpart to W. G. among the Australians is, beyond doubt, W. L. Murdoch. It is almost impossible to estimate properly the relative merits of this great batsman and of the foremost of the younger generation of Colonial players. How can we say whether Trumper is his equal or, if not, how nearly so? Anyhow, Murdoch runs through about two-thirds of Anglo-Australian cricket as the champion batsman of Australia. His run-getting was always very consistent in the teams he played for, and he did some great performances in the most important matches. It is rather difficult to detach him now from English cricket, in which he still plays so well. He has to his credit the highest score ever made by either an Englishman or an Australian in a test match—211, made at the Oval in 1884; the next highest being S. E. Gregory's 201, made at Sydney ten years later. Murdoch also scored 153 in the Oval test match of 1880. W. G. writes of him: "The perfect ease and confidence of his batting is very conspicuous. Cutting is his forte, though his clean, hard driving is delightful to watch. His placing and timing are wonderfully skilful." His play may be summed up as a fine blend of science and of brilliance. It is most difficult for a bowler to persuade him into a stroke which ought not to be made; but the moment a ball comes that suits his forcing strokes he unslips his bat at it most heartily. Two famous strokes of his are his forward cut and his off-drive past cover-point. In making the forward cut he steps out with his left foot as though to play forward, and clips the ball when almost past him with a good deal of slice. In driving past cover-point he seems to take an extra long stride forward and to time the ball on the rise; after the stroke his right foot is generally 6in. or more outside the crease. He seems to swing his bat in a small circle of which his wrists make the centre.



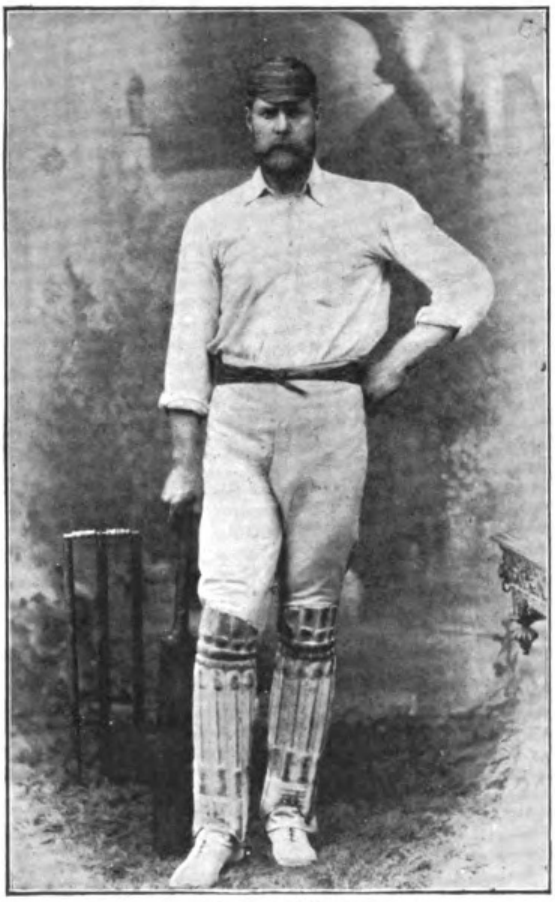
W. L. MURDOCH.
From a Photo. by Hawkins, Brighton.

Australian teams have on the whole been somewhat short of batsmen who may be described as genuine hitters. Of this sort there have been really only four—G. J. Bonnor, P. S. McDonnell, H. H. Massie, and J. J. Lyons. There have been others among them who could hit and did so at times, yet cannot be described as hitters in the sense that they relied almost altogether upon hard hitting and made themselves reputations by unadulterated driving.

G. J. Bonnor was an altogether remarkable physical specimen. He stood 6ft. 6in. and weighed 17st., but so well was he proportioned that he was quick and active to a degree. He was a very fast runner, who did 100yds. in something like level time, and he could throw a cricket ball over 120yds. In batting he had, of course, a very long reach and a very long swing. He did not, as a rule, run out to hit, but simply took a forward stride with his left foot and swung at the pitch of the ball, straight and with no pull in the stroke. His best hits were usually either directly over the bowler's head or a little to the right or left. Owing to his reach it was very

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difficult to bowl him a ball he could not hit fairly easily, for directly the ball was too short for him to get more or less to the pitch of it, it was so short as to be easily played. The great English hitter contemporary with Bonnor was C. I. Thornton, and it was much debated which of the two could hit the farthest; both of them made some tremendously long hits. Long hitting is not quite synonymous with hard hitting, so it is difficult to decide whether either of these two hit harder than others, but they seem to have hit farther. Bonnor had scarcely any strokes besides his drives, and was not so versatile a hitter as McDonnell or Lyons. It is always said of Bonnor that he had too much of a fancy for abandoning his hitting in favour of a stylish forward game, which he was convinced he could play just as well as his own proper game. According to those who saw him play often, he had not much defence, and depended for his success upon going vigorously for the bowling. This may be true, but a man who can hit as Bonnor could and does not do so is liable not to receive full credit for his attempts at a quieter style. However, he was beyond doubt an extraordinary pure hitter, and did his best performances in that rôle.



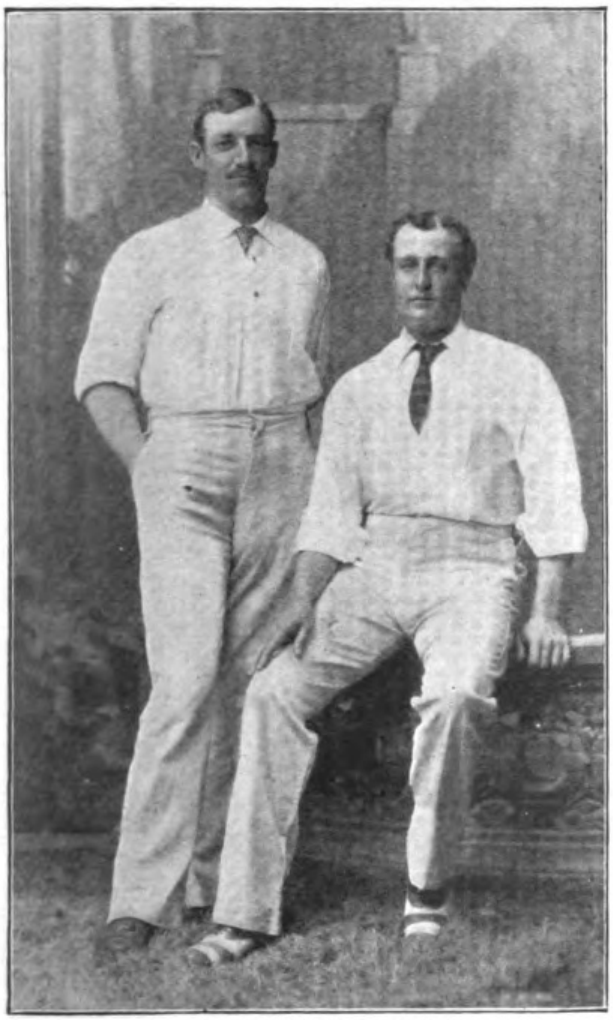
G. J. BONNOR.
From a Photo. by Hawkins, Brighton.

There is a general consensus of opinion among English cricketers that P. S. McDonnell was the best hitter that ever came over from Australia. Like Bonnor, he hit chiefly firm-footed, but he was also very quick on his feet, and could get out to a ball if he wished to. He was a very hard rather than a very long hitter; indeed, most of his hits went low. He had a good defence, and could play all sorts of strokes. He played forward well with a peculiar sort of push which seemed rather stiff compared with his free driving. He hit from his hips, and the remarkable point about his hitting was its wonderful precision; he very rarely made a mistake, and even if he did not quite get to the ball he hit so hard that most of his miss-hits went clear of the fielders. He is reckoned to have been one of the finest batsmen ever seen on bad wickets. He seemed able to hit with almost the same certainty when the bowlers could do what they liked with the ball as when the pitch gave them no assistance. There has probably never been a batsman more capable of winning a match by his own single-handed efforts on a thoroughly bad wicket. There was a certain element of safety in his aggressiveness that distinguished him from the majority even of the best hitters.

J. J. Lyons played a lot of very brilliant cricket in England. He also ranks with the firm-footed hitters; in fact, he practically always hit with his right foot inside the crease. He is reckoned in Australia to have had more strokes than even McDonnell, but not so sound a defence nor the same ability to surmount the difficulties of a bad wicket. He had a fine slash drive on the off not unlike Massie's, and could also drive straight both along the ground and in the air, but on-driving was his forte, at any rate as he played over here. He hit with a kind of exaggerated tap, and seemed to obtain his power chiefly from his wrists. The force and length of his drives, especially to the on, were out of all proportion to the slight exertion he appeared to make. Though a heavily-built man with tremendous shoulders, in the best innings he played here he relied less upon sheer strength than upon quickness of swing and accurate timing.

Two batsmen not usually included in the category of hitters might almost be described

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G. E. PALMER AND G. GIFFEN.
From a Photo. by Hawkins, Brighton.

as such—namely, George Giffen and J. Worrall. The latter proved himself a most useful bat in the 1899 team upon bowlers' wickets, for on these he united a sound defence with excellent judgment in picking the right ball to hit. George Giffen's reputation has always been regarded, and justly so, as above all that of a great all-round cricketer. But he stands very high as a batsman alone. His batting was of the highest class nearly every time he came over, and he proved himself the most successful batsman in the 1886 team. He played in beautiful style, very freely, yet watching the ball carefully. He usually scored quickly with well-timed strokes all round the wicket, but he could, if he chose, hit magnificently; indeed, in a way that showed he might, had he cared, have gone in for pure hitting with great success. At practice he used sometimes to make long, high hits which were little, if at all, short of the best Bonnor could produce.

The 1896 team, which was captained by G. H. S. Trott, was very powerful in batting. Indeed, although the balance of opinion favours Murdoch's famous teams of 1882 and 1884 as being rather stronger, there are some good judges who consider Trott's team to have been absolutely the best batting team that has yet come over. Trott himself was a batsman of the highest class, a fine off-driver and cutter, a strong hitter of bowling that suited him, and strong in defence. He could play on all kinds of wickets, and had a knack of being able to produce his best effort when things were going badly for his side. He could sit down to very impervious cricket without losing his grace and ease of style. H. Graham, too, although he fell ill and did not play up to his form that year, was a fine batsman—not exactly a hitter, but decidedly a forcing player. In his first tour in England in 1893 he actually headed the averages of McBlackham's team. He was a quick-footed bat, who generally moved out of his ground to meet the ball. Then, in addition to Giffen, already mentioned, and Darling, Hill, and Gregory, there was Frank Iredale, a batsman of charming style and finish. Iredale was generally considered an uncertain starter, but there



G. H. S. TROTT.
From a Photo. by Hawkins, Brighton.

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was no doubt about his class when he once got set. He played over here some very beautiful innings. More than any other Australian batsman, he showed the kind of form associated in England with a careful cricket education on public school lines; he might well have been a product of Eton coaching and tradition. Few of the Australian batsmen, even the best of them, have been remarkable for polish of style such as is so much admired in, for instance, L. C. H. Palairet and W. Gunn; but Iredale will always be remembered for his elegance as well as for his runs.

Of the eleventh team, which is at present in England, the senior man among the batsmen is S. E. Gregory. He came for the first time with the seventh team in 1890, the last captained by W. L. Murdoch, and he has been included ever since. It was his fielding that originally brought him to the front; indeed, it was his remarkable capacity at cover-point rather than his skill with the bat that won him his place in 1890; but, as was the case with A. C. Bannerman, if he came to field he stayed to bat. Both on his subsequent performances in run-getting and also on his style of play he must be reckoned among the finest of Australian batsmen. He is not at all a common kind of player, and not at all the kind of player one would expect to be produced upon the extra-fast pitches which prevail in Australia. He is a decidedly small man, but you do not much notice his lack of inches when he is batting, because he stands very upright both in waiting for the ball and also in playing his strokes. With the single exception of Ranjit Sinhji he is the latest player I have ever seen; by this I mean that he selects and plays his stroke more than anyone but Ranjit Sinhji at the very latest available instant during the flight of the ball from the bowler's hand. Often he seems actually to allow the ball to pitch and rise from the ground before he shapes for his stroke; he has his bat ready in time, of course, but does not begin to move it to meet the ball till the ball is all but past him. And the better form he is in the later he plays. Yet so quick is he on his feet and with his bat that he is not at all inclined to play too late. This quality of playing late, yet not too late, tells greatly in favour of the batsman possessing it; because the longer the batsman can give himself to watch the ball the more likely is he to play it with absolute precision. Gregory practically never plays forward; at any rate, he does not reach out with a stride at the pitch of the ball. At good-length balls even on a fast wicket he plays back, moving a little towards his wicket. Sometimes, but rarely, he runs out to drive with a quick, neat-footed little shuffle and hits along the ground with a quick turn of his wrists. He is a remarkable exponent of cutting; he can cut the ordinary shortish ball outside the off-stump just behind point very hard, but he can also cut balls pitched much farther up; he has a knack of clipping down on the ball when it is almost in the wicket-keeper's hands, and of placing it safely along the ground right through the slips. I have seen him cut balls so far pitched up that he might easily by playing forward have reached to the pitch of them and forced them in front of the wicket. He is also very clever at hooking the ball round to leg; he shifts his feet smartly so as to be well the other side of the ball, and keeping his bat nearly upright persuades the ball round with a smooth, neat flick. He does this off quite good-length balls from fast bowlers, especially right-hand bowlers like Lockwood and Richardson, who break on to him from the off. And he makes the stroke even when the ball rises what is to him chest high. Another notable stroke of his is one he makes from a ball so far pitched up as to be practically a yorker; he comes down upon it and nicks it just as it rises from the ground,



S. E. GREGORY.
From a Photo. by Hawkins, Brighton.

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but instead of completely smothering it, as most batsmen do, he contrives to work his bat so that the face is well turned to the off, and the ball flies past the fielder at point. Here, again, it is his wrists that do the trick—and very precise timing. Altogether he is a very neat and attractive player; and he plays so quietly and naturally that you do not at first notice his peculiarities, or, for the matter of that, how quickly he scores. Perhaps his finest innings was the 201 he made against England at Sydney in 1894. But he has scored several other centuries in these big games. In fielding at cover-point he is extraordinarily quick in covering ground, picking up and returning the ball. It is done in a little black and white flash, and woe betide the stealer of a short run. Apart from his quick, low return from cover-point, he is a very long thrower, capable of nearly 120yds. Like G. L. Jessop, he saves so many runs in the field that he is worth his place even when he fails to score. It has been said of him, "No wonder he can field, he is so near the ground." But that does not quite explain his skill.



J. DARLING.
From a Photo. by Hawkins, Brighton.

Two great thorns in the sides of English bowlers are J. Darling and Clem Hill, for besides being great batsmen they are both left-handers, and there is no doubt that bowlers find left-handers very inconvenient opponents.

Darling's first visit to England was with the 1896 team, which was captained by G. H. S. Trott. Of the 1899 team he was captain, and he leads the present team. His cricket history is rather interesting. George Giffen, in his book, "With Bat and Ball," tells how Darling first came into prominence by scoring 252 in a school match at the age of fifteen, and how about that time he played through the season with a leading junior club without losing his wicket, except on one occasion when he was run out. Had he stayed in one of the big towns his cricket career, after such a beginning, would have been simple sailing. "But his father sent him away," writes Giffen, "to manage a farm in one of the back blocks, and he was not seen in good cricket again until he had completed his twenty-third year." Then he came back to the haunts of big cricket, and within two years was chosen to play for Australia. He made 117 the first time he ever saw English bowling, and 178 in the final test match against Stoddart's team. The art of cricket is usually longer than that. Think of an English player who, without having any good-class cricket after leaving school, came into county cricket at twenty-three, and into the England eleven after a year and a half! That man would be a remarkable natural cricketer, and such must Darling be. And the same trait came out later on, for he has several times returned from up-country farming into big cricket and played successfully. He is a determined, resourceful, and very dangerous batsman. The men of Stoddart's team in 1898 held him in great respect; indeed, they regarded him as their most formidable opponent. He showed himself a master batsman in that he could play in several styles with equal success. He could sit down and graft with the most dogged defence; he could play freely with hard cuts and forward strokes; and also he could adopt the tactics of a thoroughgoing hitter. What is more, he made each different style while he used it appear absolutely natural to him. There have been few batsmen so completely strong at the same time in safety and in brilliance. He has always done well in England, but cricketers who saw him in Australia maintain that, fine as his play has been here, we have not really seen all of which he is capable. When on his careful lay his chief scoring strokes are a squarish cut, not a flick, but a plumb, vigorous knock, and a well-timed off-drive between

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cover and extra-cover. But you can see from the way he stands that he always has a genuine hit up his sleeve. When he lets himself go he drives with great force on both sides of the wicket. He usually runs down the wicket to meet the ball when hitting. His biggest hit goes high over mid-on's head, and it is a big ground out of which he cannot drop the ball in this direction. Sometimes, too, he makes this high drive straight over the bowler's head. But his hits otherwhither than to the on-side usually go low, skimming clear out of reach of the in-fields and bouncing well in front of the out-fields. He is judgmatic in picking his ball to hit, and even when going his fastest does not give the impression of risking his wicket. He takes his risk with the odds in his own favour. There is something solid and grim about his play, as though he had made plans for his innings beforehand and does not mean to depart from them. Even when out of form he makes runs and is an obstacle to bowlers—for he is a fighting batsman, level-headed and cool, a most obstinate wicket.



CLEM HILL.
From a Photo. by Hawkins, Brighton.

Clem Hill, the other famous left-hander, is an altogether different player from Darling, but, like him, has an interesting history. As a boy he went several better; playing for the same school for which Darling was so successful, in the same match some years afterwards he scored 360. He was chosen to represent Australia before he was twenty, and in his teens compiled big innings against our best bowlers. Both in England and Australia his performances have stamped him as a big match player, one of the elect that have consistently scored highly in test matches. He resembles Darling in being patient, judgmatic, and self-possessed, especially cool and collected in emergencies; but his style is quite distinct. He stands at the wicket with his knees bent and his feet rather far apart, holds his bat rather low on the handle, and settles himself in something of a crouch. He has the normal left-hander's cut, but it is more of a tap with a flickering bat than a regular slap as Darling's is. He drives on the off, not, like Darling, with an outright swing, but with a kind of magnified push, chiefly from the wrists. When he hits in front of the wicket he dances, with three or four short steps, out to the ball and delivers a kind of thrust, something between a push and a drive; and he is peculiarly clever at keeping the ball along the ground. He rarely hits in the air, and when he does so it is a low, skimming hit. One curious point in his play is that he often dances out as if to drive and then plays forward instead. He has his own way of playing and it is very effective; even when hitting he keeps his right elbow well forward and the handle of the bat well in front of the bottom of the blade, consequently he is always well over the ball. His great run-getting stroke is on the on-side from outside mid-on round to fine long-leg, and he makes it for the most part off balls that are pitched on the wicket. He moves round somewhat in front of his wicket, but very slightly so, and somewhat backwards, and meets the ball with a little upward stab, at the same time giving a flickering turn of the wrists, so that the face of the bat meets the ball aslant; yet he gives the ball the full face of the bat, apparently, till the instant of impact; the ball seems, if I may so describe it, to rest on the face of his bat for an

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instant, and in that instant the bat is turned so that the ball is deflected to the on-side. His bat is quite upright during the stroke, and he plays the ball with the bottom 2in. or so of the blade, and he seems to put an upward draw into the stroke rather as some lawn-tennis players do. The stroke is not a pull and it is not a hook, though often so described; it fetches straight balls round to leg, but as a stroke it is *sui generis*. When he is in his best form he makes the stroke off quite the perfect-length ball that most batsmen find sufficiently difficult to stop; and, moreover, he can place the ball so freely that he can avoid several short-legs in front of and behind the wicket. One of the reasons why he has made such big scores is that the strokes he scores with are exceptionally safe. Even if he mistimes the ball there is generally just that margin for error that saves him; indeed, when he mistimes the ball he usually errs on the side of smothering the ball too much, which is obviously preferable to jigging it up in the air. Above all, he is a remarkably strong defensive player: he stops the nasty ball sometimes by playing back, sometimes by playing half-cock, sometimes by playing forward, but he stops it somehow. He is really more of a forward than a back player; consequently he prefers fast to slow wickets, but he is always a difficulty to bowlers.



M. A. NOBLE.
From a Photo. by Hawkins, Brighton.

The two remaining batsmen specially worthy of notice among the younger Australians are M. A. Noble and V. Trumper. Noble is pre-eminently an all-round man, of the highest order too, so that his value as a cricketer cannot be summed without reference to his bowling. Indeed, since bowlers of first-rate ability are rarer than batsmen of similar class, most people think of Noble as a bowler rather than as a batsman. But, all the same, his batting alone entitles him to a place among the most distinguished of the Australians. Many people in England regard him as a slow and purely defensive player; one often reads of him as of the same sort as Scotton, Barlow, and W. G. Quaife. This estimate, which is about as far from the truth as may well be, seems to be due to the fact that in the test match at Old Trafford in 1899 he played a very long defensive innings, aiming almost exclusively at staying in and paying little heed to making strokes. But that innings was really quite exceptional in his case, and was the result of the position in which the Australians happened to be in that particular match. Noble's slow play then simply showed that when required he could sit down to an effort of the most dogged defence. His natural style is quite different. George Giffen describes him as a most attractive batsman, who, when set, scores all round the wicket very rapidly. And that is much nearer the mark; for, although the strength of his defence is a notable characteristic of his play, he has lots of beautiful strokes, which he uses freely unless the state of the match demands an extra amount of caution. It is worth noting that George Giffen writes of him that "with experience he will doubtless take fewer risks, and without materially diminishing his attractiveness." So evidently he is not considered a slow player in Australia. Like most tall, slim, long-limbed batsmen, he has a freedom and ease of movement that make his cricket pleasant to watch. Among his best strokes is a superb cut, so correctly made that it might be put into books as a model; he picks his ball admirably, and gets well over the stroke with-

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out sacrificing any power. He has also a clever glide from the ball on the leg-stump. He stands where he is, but, bending his knees somewhat, turns the upper part of his body and shoots his bat forward with the face slanting so that the ball glances away fine. He plays a grand off-drive, very correct, stepping well across to the ball with his left foot and swinging with a dead straight bat. He can also hit hard, especially on the on-side, but he usually plays an orthodox forward game. In estimating his batting feats it must not be forgotten that he does a great deal of bowling. He is one of the finest fielders at point ever seen: very quick and active, with hands that seem unable to miss the ball — yielding, prehensile hands.



V. TRUMPER.
From a Photo. by Thiele.

Victor Trumper, last and, in the opinion of many, the best, stands out as a batsman of batsmen. In the whole history of Australian cricket there has never been, it is said by those who have seen every team from the first, a superior to Trumper in attractiveness of style wedded to thorough efficiency. He is one of those players who, even if they only stay in for an over or two, catch a cricketer's eye as tip-top batsmen. When he played against Stoddart's team in Australia, one of the Englishmen, himself a great batsman, offered the opinion, judging by two quite small innings, that Trumper would prove one of the finest of Colonial players. An Australian critic poked fun at this judgment and suggested that, naturally enough, the Englishmen wished for the selection of an opponent they could easily get out. But subsequent events have proved the opinion to be correct. In the 1899 Australian team Trumper was included practically as an extra man, but he won his place easily enough and distinguished himself by making a magnificent 135 not out against England at Lord's. A finer innings than that no one could wish to see, and he has played plenty since equally good. His batting is altogether remarkable for the number of strokes he has, the pace at which he scores, the almost unfailing accuracy with which he judges the length of every ball, and the perfection of his timing. It is scarcely an exaggeration to say that he has a scoring stroke for every kind of ball that is bowled. Yet when he is making runs at his quickest pace he never appears to be forcing his play; the bowling is simply made to look easy, and that it should be whipped about all over the field appears quite natural. Moreover, he is able to play the same free and easy game on all kinds of wickets — fast and slow, wet and dry, true and treacherous. The features of his play are the accuracy with which he judges the length of the ball and the complete absence of any hesitation or half-heartedness in his strokes. He seems to know every time exactly what he is doing, and he makes quite good balls easy to play by the way he puts himself into position. It is a great lesson in cricket to watch how he uses his feet. The power of his strokes comes from correct timing and the free play of his wrists; he does not lunge at the ball, or let fly with a heavy swing. He is one of the few batsmen equally strong on both sides of the wicket. He has a remarkable knack of cutting; he scarcely ever lets a ball go by on the off side of the wicket; most batsmen like a particular sort of ball to cut, but he seems to find all pretty well equally cutable. Also he has a most peculiar knack of being able to play across straight balls without missing them; sometimes he goes forward as though to drive the ball back at the bowler, but at the last moment he gives his bat a turn and forces the ball between mid-on and square-leg. You never quite know where he will send the ball, but when he has done it the stroke always looks the right one. He does most unorthodox things, but never seems playing otherwise than in the best style.

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The Incendiary.

By Edwin Pugh.

I.

AN accident suggested the idea to him. He had come in late one evening, slightly fuddled. It was dark in the shop, so he lit the gas. He used a wax match and flung it down carelessly. Then he went into the back parlour to prepare his evening meal. He was engaged at the fire when an odd buzzing sound smote on his ears, and then a pungent odour of smoke filled his nostrils. He looked over his shoulder and saw that the glass panels of the door leading to the shop were bright with a flickering gleam which certainly did not emanate from the crackling wood in the grate. He set down the kettle on the hob with a shaking hand and stumbled, terror-stricken, into the shop. A livid sheet of flame rushed out to meet him, and he perceived that a heap of loose paper on the floor had ignited. For a moment he was daunted. Then, suddenly sobered, he swept a muddle of heavy books from the counter, kicked them on to the blazing pile, and so extinguished it. The whole thing was done and over in a few seconds; and then he was leaning breathlessly against the wall, fanning the smoke away from his face with nerveless hands, whilst the sweat streamed down his forehead into his eyes. Little sullen threads of fire still ran and pulsed through the reeking, scattered heap. He stamped them out. And still fear was upon him, so that he turned the charred fragments over and over with his toe until not a spark remained. Then he crept back into his parlour, utterly spent, and sat down heavily and rested his head on his hands.

He was a moody, silent man for the rest of that evening.

About nine o'clock his son Lance came lounging in — the son whom he loved even better than he loved gin; the son who had always been at once the pride and the plague of the old man's life. He was a boy some twelve or thirteen years old, big and strong and not ill-looking, though of a dour, sullen countenance. His looks did not belie his nature. To use a homely phrase, there was no doing anything with Master Lance.

He had had more chances than usually fall to the lot of boys of his class and he had abused them all. He was not inherently bad, but idle and feckless. He hated the constraint and discipline of lessons and study. Twice his father had sent him to decent schools in the country in the hope of weaning him from his growing love of the loose life of the streets. From the first school he had been expelled, after only a few weeks' sojourn, on the score of gross and incorrigible insubordination. From the second school, which was in sterner hands, he had run away; had come climbing into the house by way of a back window in the dead of night and stolen softly to his bedroom, where he was discovered next morning. Nor could his father, either by force or persuasion, induce him to return to the school. In vain he stormed and wheedled, threatened and pleaded. The boy listened, scowling, in stubborn silence. And the old man, his will sapped by self-indulgence, his parental authority undermined by the example of his own disreputable life, had been forced to give up the struggle from sheer weariness of spirit. So it came about that young Lance



"THE BOY LISTENED, SCOWLING, IN STUBBORN SILENCE."

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Mounsey got into the habit of loafing away his days, and was fast by way of becoming an idle wastrel.

But to-night the old man, instead of chiding the boy as he had intended, merely commanded him straightway to bed.

It was some days later that he surprised Lance at the breakfast-table by once more broaching to him the subject of his education.

"To-morrow," said he, speaking abruptly after a lengthy silence between them, "your old master is coming to take you back to school again. I have given him explicit instructions to keep you well under watch and ward this time. I have told him——" The boy mumbled unintelligibly. "Not a word!" his father exclaimed. "You go. I have been weak. But I am determined now. You go. Once for all, understand that. And if you attempt to escape again, or if you———"

"I *sha'n't* go," said the boy.

But on the morrow a stern-faced man stalked into the shop and claimed Lance with such an air of implacable resolution that the boy was cowed at last.

"I shall not go," said he, nevertheless.

His old schoolmaster, having had his instructions, did not deign to argue or coax. He went to the door of the shop and beckoned. Two stalwart young men came in answer to the summons and laid strong hands on Lance.

"Don't hurt him!" cried the father, whilst the boy kicked and struggled in a puny fury of rage.

"Mr. Mounsey," said the schoolmaster, "pray remember our compact. The boy comes to me to be dealt with as I see fit, or he does not come at all. I must have the absolute discretion you promised me."

"Yes—yes, I know. Quite right," stammered the father. "But—he is my only one."

Lance, finding his struggles unavailing, was suddenly still. The flash of anger died from his face. But he glared at his father fiercely and bared his teeth in a defiant sneer.

"They'll not keep me," he muttered. "I'll run away as I did before. You see if I don't."

The father's face twitched painfully. He approached his son.

"Lance," said he, gently, "it is for your own good I am sending you away. You have brought it on yourself. You *must* learn — if you are to make your way in the world." His voice grew unsteady. "Good-bye, my son. Obey this gentleman and he will be kind to you. You will, of course, not be unnecessarily harsh," he added, turning an imploring face to the schoolmaster.

"You know my methods," was the curt reply. "I alter them in favour of none of my charges. You have put the boy in my hands. I will take him under certain conditions, which you know as well as I do. If you have altered your mind——"

"No, no!" wailed the unhappy father. "But take him away, please, at once. I can't bear to see him so roughly handled. Won't you say good-bye to me, Lance?"

"No," snarled the boy. "I hate you!"



"WON'T YOU SAY GOOD-BYE TO ME, LANCE?"

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II.

HE went away, and the father was left alone. He would have realized his loneliness the more acutely, perhaps, but the two days that followed the boy's departure were unusually busy ones for him. The idea which the small conflagration in the shop had suggested to him was full-grown now and had become a set purpose. He made his preparations diligently. First, he bought some gallons of paraffin oil—not from the shop at the corner, however; that would have been too transparent. No; he travelled afar late at night, and came slinking back under cover of the dark with his heavy cans. He poured the oil on the wooden stairs; soaked some scores of the books in it; dashed it on dusty curtains, on bedclothes and hangings; made libations with it on the bare flooring, and covered the puddles with a loose litter of newspapers and magazines. In the repairing of old books he was wont to use a kind of coarse muslin. He had a large stock of this flimsy stuff in the house, tightly rolled on pieces of board. He draped the walls with yards on yards of this muslin, laid trails of it from parlour to attic, winding it about the banisters, stretching it in loosely-twisted coils from one piece of furniture to another. All day he toiled in the empty, resounding house, exploring disused rooms that he had well-nigh forgotten the existence of. And at the end of the second day the fell work was done.

He surveyed his elaborate arrangements and was satisfied. His plans seemed to him masterly in their completeness. He had got the boy out of the way into a place of safety. The fire, once started, would spread with immitigable rapidity in that old, dry, worm-eaten dwelling; long before the engines could possibly arrive all the evidences of his crime would be effectually destroyed. There was nobody to pry on his proceedings, nobody to suspect his integrity. He had been insured many years; he owed no large sums in the neighbourhood. Nobody but himself had even an inkling that he stood on the brink of ruin—nobody need ever know that circumstance now. But the thing that pleased him most, by reason of its consummate cleverness, was a cunning piece of acting performed by him that day.

A neighbour had called with a small commission.

"Smell o' paraffin!" exclaimed the neighbour, sniffing.

Old Mounsey leered across the counter, swaying to and fro. "Just upset a lamp—filling it," said he.

"Catch the house a-fire one o' these days," the neighbour warned him.

"Not me," old Mounsey hiccoughed.

"Drunken beast!" the neighbour remarked, quite audibly, as he quitted the shop.

Old Mounsey chuckled.

But he was not chuckling as he descended the stairs in the small hours of the following morning. His face was pallid and damp; his limbs quaked. He stood among his books in the dark shop, listening eagerly to a distant, faint crackle that sounded from above. He had doffed his clothes, wore only slippers and a pair of trousers in addition to his nightshirt. But he dared not stir yet from the place, ardently as he longed to escape from the growing peril overhead. He must wait until the fire got a firm hold on the timbers. To raise the alarm too soon would be to bring the neighbours rushing in; his infamy would be at once discovered.

It was eerie work, though, to cower and shiver in that darkened shop, knowing what he did of what was happening upstairs. He had seen the little blue flames running jerkily hither and thither; had heard the dull, muffled report of the wind-touched blaze that had sprung up near the landing-window as he came hurrying down. He listened, and was so deadly afraid he could hardly keep his balance.

Outside, a wayfarer passed with erratic tread—some roysterer who hummed a merry tune on his homeward way. Was any glare yet visible in the street? He could overhear the pumping of his own heart's blood. The fevered thoughts rioting in his brain seemed almost articulate. Something fell on the floor above with a loud clatter. There was a slow, rending sound—the ante-room door had slipped from its rusty hinges; he had reckoned they would not long withstand the heat. Dared he raise the alarm yet?

On the glass panels of the parlour-door a tremulous, rosy gleam was playing now. That was caused by the draught from the yard as it fanned the smouldering muslin on the kitchen stair-rail.

Crack! Crack! Crack!

The fire was kindling apace.

All his impulse was to escape pell-mell into the street. But he must not yield to panic. He must wait a little longer. He put an iron hand of restraint upon himself.

His thoughts ticked fast.

Now it seemed to him that his elaborate

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preparations were but clumsy devices after all. What if the fire presently died out altogether? What if they found that rotten woodwork still soused in oil and dripping wet, untouched by the blaze?—the muslin, too, so ingeniously draped and entwined, with never so much as a scorch upon it? He called to mind one hasty tangle that he had woven between the cellar and the scullery—the scullery had a stone floor—they would find him out. He wiped his forehead with a cold, clammy hand.

A sudden fierce roar rent the purring silence. A broad, pale flare lit up the shop, burst, and a hundred living tongues of flame went dancing across the floor, writhing up the walls to the ceiling.

He shrieked, fumbled at the door-fastenings, and fled into the street.

III.

AT the opening of the door a gust of cold, brisk air streamed in, fanning the fire to fury. A cloud of smoke, riddled with sparks and thickly shot with flickering forks of flame, billowed out behind him into the street—a street so dark, after the dazzle of light within, that old Mounsey felt as if he had been smitten blind. He tottered forward, tripped on the kerb, and rolled into the road. There, for a moment, he lay half-stunned, sprawling on the damp earth.

He rose, trembling, mechanically brushed the dirt from his hands, and staggered to the opposite pavement. Then he turned and surveyed the red ruin he had wrought.

There was little display of fire as yet; but black, rolling columns went pouring up, and all the windows showed as caverns filled with a hollow, fluctuating flare. He stood as one transfixed, unable to stir, listening to the roar of the flames and the crackling of the blazing beams. His wide eyes pringled and watered in the driving reek.

Slowly he grew conscious of a gathering tumult in the street.

Windows were pushed up with rude violence. There was a continuous drawing of bolts, a flinging open of doors. He heard many voices mingled in startled inquiry. Children whimpered, and their mothers soothed them in low, crooning tones.

Someone clutched the old man's elbow, and he saw that he was surrounded by an eager, questioning crowd. But the confusion of tongues was so great he could not make out what was said to him. He cowered before the rabble in vague affright.

"Poor old man!" said a woman.

After that it seemed to him that but another moment passed, and then in an instant the street was thickly thronged. He was bandied about from hand to hand, his thoughts spinning wildly as the thoughts of one in delirium. At last he found refuge on a doorstep, where he sank down, gasping and panting, his cheek against some cold iron railings.



"A GUST OF COLD, BRISK AIR STREAMED IN, FANNING THE FIRE TO FURY."

A man with a rumpled

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head came out and offered him a glass of water. But even as he stretched forth his hand to take it he was suddenly aware of a swift change in the spirit of the crowd.

Hitherto the general feeling had been one of mere vulgar delight in a sensational spectacle. That feeling was now swept away by the inrush of a new mood—a mood so poignantly acute with emotion he could not but share in its intensity, stunned as his faculties were. He strove dully to understand the mystery of this change. He gazed about, looked haggardly from face to face, tried to catch what the people were saying. He saw no sign of menace, such as he dreaded to see, in any of the countenances turned toward him, but only an expression of pitying horror. Clamant voices, that had lately been raised in unmeaning shouts, were abruptly subdued to a low, inarticulate murmur.

He wrung his hands in a frenzy of nameless fear, rose to his feet, looking up.

And as he looked up a deeper hush fell on the watching multitude. Shuddering women, with averted eyes, wailed in chorus piteously, and that was the only human sound. But before that infinitely plaintive outcry the dull, triumphant roaring of the fire seemed suddenly to tremble and wane, even as the darkness trembles before a kindling light.

In the midst of them all the incendiary, every vestige of life and colour drained from his staring face, stood motionless and erect.

His eyes were fixed on an upper window. There, blackly outlined against a leaping red glare, the figure of his son was revealed. Faithful to his threat, the wilful boy had broken bounds and returned home, as on that former occasion; he had got into the house by way of the back-yard and gone straightway to his own room to sleep, worn out by the rigours of his arduous flight. This was his awakening. He was leaning over the sill with arms passionately outstretched. His face worked, his lips were moving, but terror had struck him dumb. At last, by a supreme effort, he wrung out a cry of "Father!" that soared up, clear and shrill, above all other sounds.

The cry seemed to snap the spell that bound the old man's senses. He woke from his stupor of horror. He thrust through the thin fringe of gazers that stood between him and the burning house. They tried to hold him back, but he broke from their clutches and plunged headlong into the smoke. The open door of the shop engulfed him.

Within the shop the heat at once began to sear his flesh, the noisome fumes to choke and blind him. But the wind from without was blowing the flames back, and the flooring, though it was so hot it blistered his feet through his thin slippers, still held firmly together. Through the haze he could see, by the fitful light beyond, the open framework of a door that led to the rooms above. He bore toward it, quivering as the drifting sparks flayed his face and hands, shutting tight his lips to keep out the oily vapour that stung his nostrils and eye-lids. He turned at the door, groped through the confined blackness of the narrow hall, and came to the foot of the stairway. The muslin he had draped about the banisters was all shrivelled to filmy shreds; many of the upright spars were reduced to a winking red char. But here and there one stood intact upholding the handrail still. The stairs themselves, however, were but a glowing rottenness of cindered wood. He set his foot upon the bottom step and it crumbled, bringing down the whole flight in a golden rain of fire. A gaping chasm yawned before him, an abysmal gulf belching forth dust and smoke. That way was impassable. But he might yet reach the yard by way of the parlour. He remembered that there were level leads above the outhouses, just beneath the sills of the upper windows. He groped through the fire-lit fog into the stone-paved scullery. The clothes dropped in tinder from his limbs; his fingers were pared of skin to the very bone; his singed hair blistered his scalp. The dry heat scorched his tortured flesh and cracked his lips. The smoke and dust filled his parched throat so that he could scarcely breathe. Falling beams broke in a dust of red embers on his devoted head. Once he fell headlong over a rafter underfoot and came down heavily, cutting his naked shoulder against a jagged door-jamb. But he did win to the open yard at last, blackened and bruised and bleeding, his eye-balls pricking in his head, his senses almost gone. He drew in a sweet draught of air—sweet after the atmosphere of the house, despite the soot-motes and the sparks with which it was heavy-laden. There was a crazy ladder at the bottom of the yard. He found it, though all things had grown dim to his smarting, inflamed vision, and propped it clumsily against the outer wall of the scullery. It began to slip the moment he set foot upon it. But so swiftly did he swarm up its loose rungs that, though

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it slanted sideways as he mounted, he was on the leads before it finally fell crashing into the yard. The window was open; but he narrowly escaped following the ladder before he lighted on it, so dense was the mantle of smoke that wrapped the walls about.

"Lance, I'm coming!" he tried to call out; but could utter no sound.

A monstrous, curling flower of flame still intervened between him and the bedroom. He covered his face with his torn hands and passed through the very heart of it. He blessed the heat that had stripped the scanty garments from his limbs; the fire might scorch and blister his naked flesh, but it could not cling about and follow him as it would have done had he been fully clothed.

The door of the bedroom was shut. He burst it open. Within, the smoke was dense and pungent, but there was little fire—only one blazing hollow near the wall where a rafter had given way. Again he endeavoured to call out; in vain. His strength was well-nigh spent. He sank slowly on his hands and knees and fumbled his way across the room toward the square of paler gloom that marked where the window lay. There, prostrate on the floor, he found his son.

Dizzily he crooked one arm over the sill and so raised the body up. It stirred feebly against his bare breast. His heart throbbed. New vigour came to him. Twice he nearly gained his feet, and twice he failed and fell back again. At the third attempt he was successful. But his brain was swimming. Sight and sense alike were almost gone.

Into the mist of his clogged brain a faint, glad sound was borne. His dying eyes, looking up, caught a filmy glimpse of a shining helmet. He thought it was the helmet of an angel of the Lord. Two strong hands reached down from Heaven and caught up his precious burden into safety. But no dull echo of the cheer that arose from the crowd below, as the fireman descended the ladder with the still living form of the boy, was ever fated to sound in the ears of the dead father. He fell with the roof upon him, and was buried in the fiery ruins.

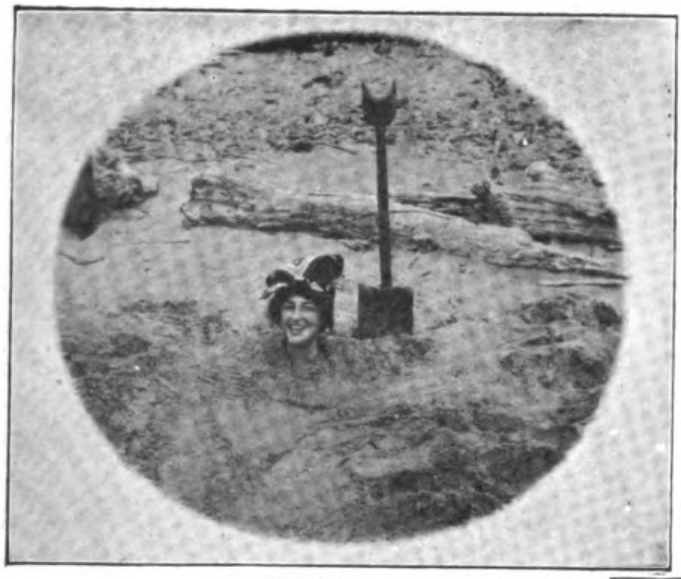
They raised a carved white stone to his memory. But perhaps the blackened walls of the house, within which they found his body, were a fitter memorial to the manner of his death than all the splendours of his marble tomb.



"DIZZILY HE CROOKED ONE ARM OVER THE SILL."

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Seaside Pictures.

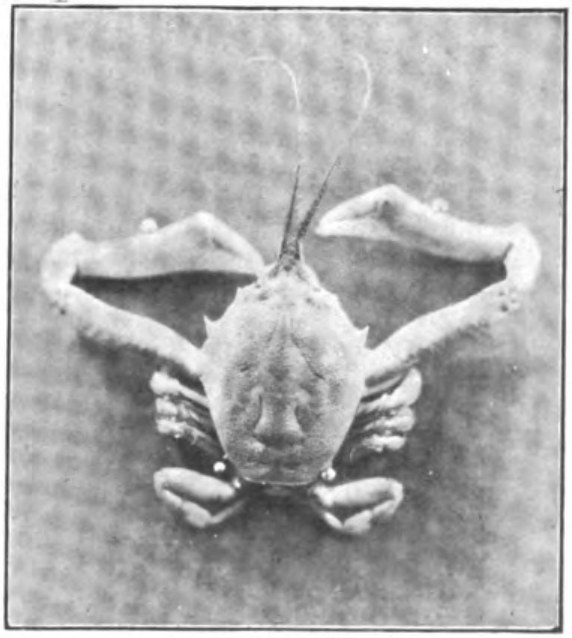


A SAND-FAIRY.

WE will commence this article, which is designed to set before the reader a remarkable collection of quaint and curious seaside pictures, with one which can only by a kind of "bull" be called a seaside picture at all, as it was, in fact, taken on the shore of a lake. "This idea was conceived," says Mr. H. C. Brewer, Clinton, Ont., Canada, "and the photograph taken by my son Hugh, aged thirteen years old, on the beach at Bayfield, a summer resort on the shore of Lake Huron, Ontario, Canada, ten miles from the town of Clinton, where we reside. The picture shows his sister buried up to her neck in sand."

It is frequently a matter of wonder as to where all the visitors to fashionable watering-places find accommodation during the season. It is evident from our next photo., sent to us by Mr. R. S. Archer, Craigleith, Lowwood Road, Birkenhead, that the difficulty is solved at Llandudno by utilizing the bathing-machines, the one in question being "for 85 ladies."

This crab was found upon the beach at Seabrook, Hythe, and shows upon its back a very good representation of the human face. The features are not only outlined upon the crab's shell, but the nose and lips stand out, while the mouth



A CRABBED EXPRESSION.

and eyes are indented fairly deeply. The crab was only pinned upon a board in the same position in which it died, and has not been posed in any way. One lady friend of the contributor declares it is a woman's face, and certainly the position of one claw does suggest the setting right of a refractory hairpin. The shell is of pale pink colour, and the indentations are lined in white, which gives a more natural appearance in the actual thing than the photograph suggests. The photo. is by Mr. W. W. Guenee, of Seabrook, and was contributed by Mr. J. E. Franklin, Rosslyn House, Seabrook, Hythe.



"FOR 85 LADIES."

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A PHOTOGRAPHER'S LITTLE JOKE.

The two photographs here reproduced were taken by a friend of the gentlemen portrayed. After the first photo. had been taken he perceived a big wave approaching and immediately asked them to wait while he took another. At the critical moment he released the shutter, and the result of his little joke is here strikingly shown. The sender, who prefers to be known only by initials, is H. J. B., "Glenville," Glengariff Road, Sea Point, Cape Town.

At two o'clock on the morning of April 16th, during a strong gale and thick weather, a steamer stranded on the coast of the Sea of Marmora. Her captain naturally wished to communicate with the shore in order to send for assistance, but owing to the darkness and the heavy seas it was considered unsafe to attempt doing so by boat. At daybreak, however, what was the astonishment of the crew to discover that they were right alongside the end of a small wooden jetty which the vessel in stranding had actually touched, but not damaged in the slightest. A rope ladder was promptly lowered, and one of the officers was sent on shore to the nearest village to wire to the vessel's agent at Constantinople. Salvage steamers soon arrived, and the vessel was refloated on the following day, after 400 tons of cargo had been thrown overboard. Her position was now very serious, and there was great danger of her becoming a total wreck owing to the waves causing her to bump heavily on the stony bottom. But even if that had occurred, the crew would have found no difficulty in saving their lives and property by means of the jetty alongside of which their vessel had stranded. The steamer was the *Flanders*, of Antwerp, bound from Ibrail for Salonica.



A LUCKY STRANDING.

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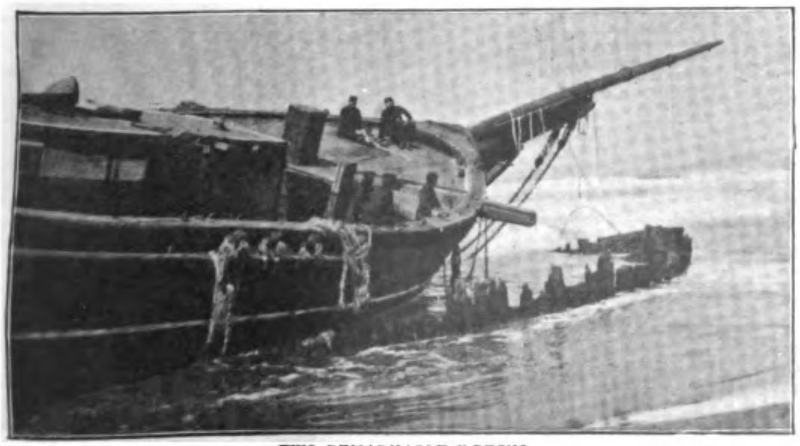
A CARVEN SEA-SHELL.

Our next photograph depicts an extremely novel method of carving, and speaks volumes for the patience and skill of the operator. The writing is executed in relief, each line and letter being beautifully legible, in spite of the fact that it is over half a century old and that the shell was for some years a plaything in our contributor's family. It is the work of an Italian cameo-cutter, a profession by no means overcrowded, on account of the high order of precision and artistic taste necessary in such a calling. This photograph was sent by Mrs. Williams, Honor Oak Park, S.E.



A DRAWING IN SAND.

The accompanying photograph illustrates two remarkable shipwrecks on the Pacific Ocean beach below the celebrated Cliff House and Seal Rocks, near the entrance to the Golden Gate of San Francisco's great harbour. Almost a quarter of a century ago the big barque *King Philip* was driven ashore in a storm, and beached far above the waves by an unusually high tide. She had sailed from her last port on a Friday, the sailors' hoodoo day, and had been completely wrecked on a Friday. More than twenty-four years later the schooner *Reporter*, plying between the same ports as the *King Philip* had been doing, and also engaged in the lumber trade, sailed from her last port on a Friday, and was completely wrecked on March 13th, to complete the ill-omened combination of sailors' superstitions. For weeks she lay with a broken back, a helpless thing, more than a hundred yards out in the combing breakers. Then, one night, she mysteriously rose on some mighty swell, and came in and settled precisely within the ribs of the *King Philip*, bow within bow and stern within stern, as nicely as though men and machinery had placed her there within the wonderful coffin.—Sent by Mr. Archie Rice, San Francisco.



TWO REMARKABLE WRECKS.

The above photograph, for which we have to thank Mr. A. Brandon, Redfields, Winchfield, Hants, is of a drawing in the sand, executed by a poor cripple with a knife curved like a scythe. He stated that it took him about an hour and a quarter

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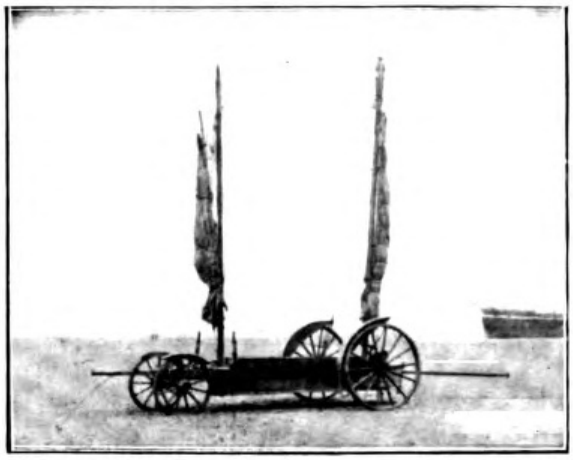
to finish. The inscriptions run thus: "Kindly Help a Poor Cripple (all my own work)," and underneath the pots of flowers, "Three Pots a Shilling," and beneath the castle, "Hawarden Castle, Home of the late W. E. Gladstone."

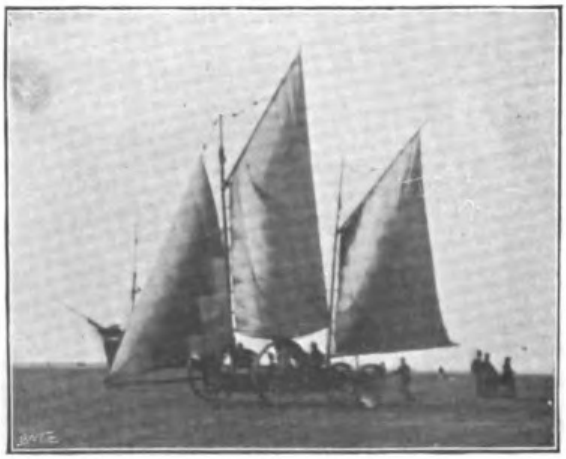
Here is a necklace consisting of forty-one stones, graduated according to their size and threaded on a cord. As, however, it weighs 7lb., it is hardly convenient as a lady's adornment. The stones are very curious, owing to the fact that the perforations through them have been caused by the action of the sea and the contact with sand and sharp pieces of flint. It might seem that picking up so many of these natural beads on the beach was like looking for a blacksmith's shop in Venice, yet they were gathered inside of two hours on the shore at Hastings. No doubt our readers who set themselves the task will be as successful as the gentleman who sends us the photograph, Mr. V. H. Woolrich, Pittsburg, Pa., U.S.A.



A PEBBLE NECKLACE.

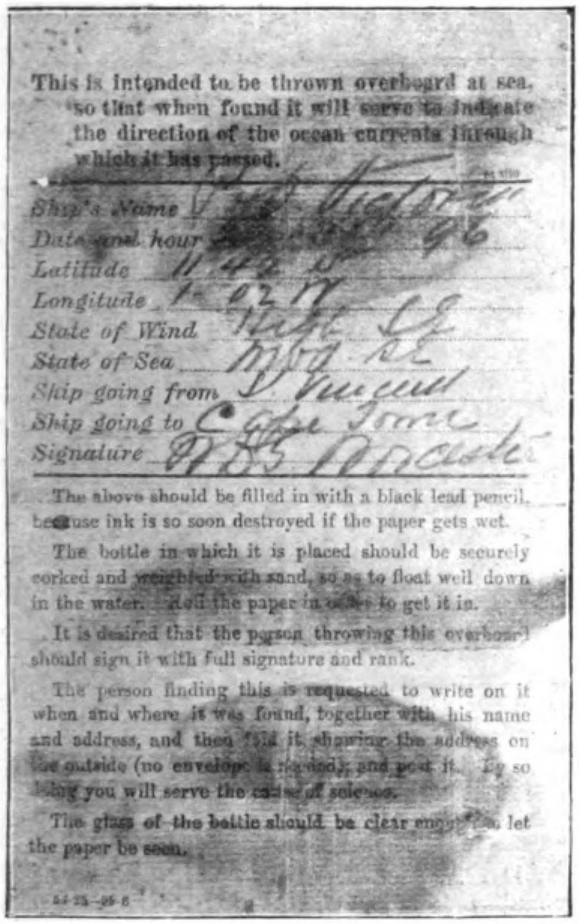
The article in a recent number of THE STRAND on "Sailing on Land" has called to mind an amusement which was once common in Southport, viz.: sand-yachting. The local name of the Southport sail-carriages was "Flying Dutchmen," and they might be described as fishing-boats with flat bottoms, mounted on four wheels. The accompanying illustrations will show what they looked like. In the first there is a view of a Flying Dutchman with sails furled, and in the second the sails are spread ready for a run. Photographs of a Flying Dutchman are extremely rare, and even among men who owned these boats there is scarcely one to be found. With a fine stretch of sand in front of the Promenade, Southport was an ideal place for the use of these boats, though it was never professed that they were capable of anything like the speed mentioned in the article in THE STRAND. True, they possessed a much greater sail area than the Californian boat, but it was not considered advisable to run much more than a mile in one direction, and so the speed which they might have attained on a long run was never tested. Usually they would go at the rate of eight miles an hour, and the trip was exhilarating enough for the ordinary passenger even at that speed, especially when, with a dexterous turn of the rudder and a shifting of the sails, the boat was instantly put about and the return journey was commenced. There was method in these short runs, for the charge was similar to that of a donkey ride—threepence—and on a breezy day the owner would make a very good day's wage for himself and his assistant. Harry Furniss, in his famous





THE "FLYING DUTCHMEN" OF SOUTHPORT.

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This is intended to be thrown overboard at sea, so that when found it will serve to indicate the direction of the ocean currents through which it has passed.

Ship's Name P. and O. Victoria
Date and hour [illegible] 96
Latitude 11 42 S
Longitude 1° 02 W
State of Wind Light SE
State of Sea Mod. SE
Ship going from S. Vincent
Ship going to Cape Town
Signature [illegible]

The above should be filled in with a black lead pencil, because ink is so soon destroyed if the paper gets wet.

The bottle in which it is placed should be securely corked and weighted with sand, so as to float well down in the water. Roll the paper in order to get it in.

It is desired that the person throwing this overboard should sign it with full signature and rank.

The person finding this is requested to write on it when and where it was found, together with his name and address, and then fold it, showing the address on the outside (no envelope is required), and post it. By so doing you will serve the cause of science.

The glass of the bottle should be clear enough to let the paper be seen.

FOUND IN A BOTTLE.

picture of Southport sands, published in *Punch* in October, 1891, showed, among other things peculiar to Southport, a couple of Flying Dutchmen careering along before a strong wind. So strong, in fact, was the wind that several of the passengers were being blown bodily into space, and where they would land was quite problematical. Just at that time the Flying Dutchmen were falling rapidly into disuse. The first marine lake had been constructed, and this rather limited the area over which they could perform their evolutions. A year or two later the second marine lake absorbed another slice of the playground, and finally, when the two lakes were joined and the marine drive was constructed, the doom of the Flying Dutchmen was sealed. For several years the body of one of the old boats was to be seen within the marine drive enclosure close by the pier, but it has now vanished and the place thereof knows it no more, nor will do, unless some individual of a speculative turn of mind and a desire to preserve some of the local colouring sees fit to construct other boats on the same lines. There is no reason why this should not be made a profitable investment, seeing that with past experience as a guide a comfortable, safe, and speedy boat could be planned. It is not a little curious that Southport's lost carriage should turn up again in far-away California, where it is being put to practical use, and where its designers are able to get such a "good run for their money." So writes Mr. J. S. Dickin, of Southport.

The form here reproduced, it will be observed, was thrown overboard from the P. and O. steamship *Victoria*, on July 30th, 1896, between St. Helena and Ascension Island. The following report was issued at the Sydney Observatory on March 24th, 1899: "This paper was found in Mexico and sent by the Mexican Consul at Galveston, Texas, to Sir Julian Pauncefote, British Representative; by him it was sent to the Marquis of Salisbury, K.G., and by him to the Governor of N.S.W.; he sent it to Mr. Brunker, Chief Secretary, and he sent it on to the Premier; thence it went to the Minister for Public Instruction, and thence to me. It was found in the Laguna Madre, State of Tamaulipas, Mexico, date not given.—(Signed) H. C. Russell." It is estimated that up to the time it was found it had travelled about 6,300 miles in 850 days.

Our last photo. represents the humorous aspect of the subject of this article. It depicts cave-dwellers (*Troglodytes Gregorii*) recently "shot" on the coast of Wales, as Mr. F. Gregory Jones, 5, Waterford Road, Oxton, Cheshire, informs us.



"CAVE-DWELLERS."

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V.—THE BESIEGED CASTLE.

THE others were "kept in." Only Robert was allowed to go out "to get something." This, of course, was a wish from the sand-fairy. There was no time to arrange anything with the others before he went, and when he had found the fairy he found also that he had no ideas. So at last he said:—

"Look here, can't you let the others have a wish without their coming here for it? Just make it come true, whatever they wish in the house."

The psammead said "Yes." And Robert tore home, full of sudden anxiousness. Because, of course, the others wouldn't know, and they would very likely say "I wish it was dinner-time," or "I wish you wouldn't fidget so," without knowing that it would come true, and then a whole day's wish would be wasted.

He ran as fast as he could, but when he turned the corner that ought to have brought him within sight of the ornamental ironwork on the top of the house he stopped short. There *was* no house, the garden railings were gone, and, yes—the others *had* wished—without any doubt they had. And they must have wished that they lived in a castle. For there the castle stood, black and stately and very tall and broad, with battlements and shot windows and eight great towers, and where the garden and the orchard had been there were white things dotted.

Robert walked slowly on, and as he got nearer he saw that these were tents and men in armour were walking about among the tents—crowds and crowds of them.

"Oh, crikey!" said Robert, fervently. "They *have!* They've wished for a castle and it's being besieged! It's just like that sand-fairy. I wish we'd never seen the beastly thing!"

Two men in steel caps were coming towards him. They had high brown boots on their long legs, and they came towards him with such great strides that Robert remembered the shortness of his own legs and did not run away. He knew it would be useless to himself, and he feared it might be irritating to the foe. So he stood quite still, and the two men seemed quite pleased with him.

"By my halidome," said one, "a brave varlet this."

Robert felt pleased at being *called* brave, and somehow it made him *feel* brave. He passed over the "varlet." It was the way people talked in historical romances for the

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young, he knew, and it was evidently not meant for rudeness. He only hoped he would be able to understand what they said to him. He had not been always able to quite follow the conversations in the historical romances for the young.

"His garb is strange," said the other. "Some outlandish treachery, belike."

"Say, lad, what brings thee hither?"

Robert knew this meant, "Now, then, youngster, what are you up to here, eh?" so he said:—

"If you please, I want to go home."

"Go, then!" said the man in the longest boots; "none hindereth and naught lets us to follow. Zooks," he added, in a cautious undertone, "I misdoubt me but he beareth tidings to the besieged."

"Where is thy home, young knave?" inquired the man with the largest steel cap.

"Over there," said Robert, and directly he had said it he knew he ought to have said "Yonder!"

"Ha! sayest so," rejoined the longest boots; "come hither, boy. This is matter for our leader."

And to the leader Robert was dragged forthwith—by the reluctant ear.

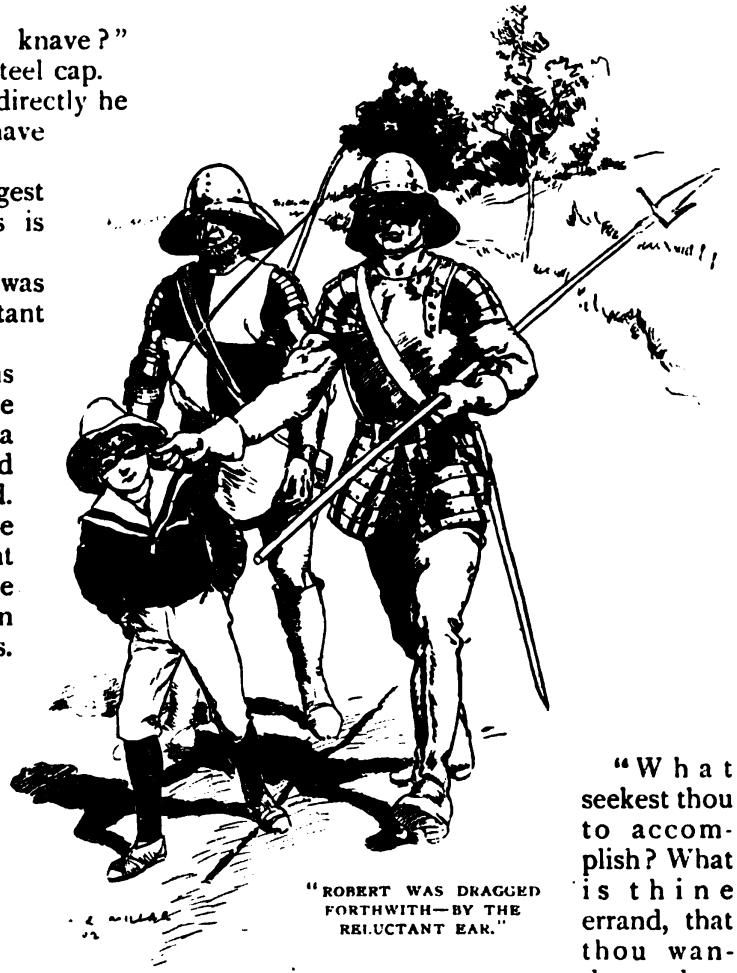
The leader was the most glorious creature Robert had ever seen. He had armour, and a helmet, and a horse, and a crest and feathers, and a shield, and a lance, and a sword. His armour and his weapons were all, I am almost sure, of quite different periods. The leader was exactly like the pictures Robert had so often admired in the historical romances. The shield was thirteenth century, while the sword was of the pattern used in the Peninsular War; the cuirass was of the time of Charles I., and the helmet dated from the Second Crusade. The arms on the shield were very grand—three red running lions on a blue ground—the tents were of the latest brand approved by the War Office, and the whole appearance of the camp, army and leader, might have been a shock to some. But Robert was dumb with admiration, and it all seemed to him perfectly correct, because he knew no more of heraldry or archæology than the gifted artists who drew the pictures for the historical romances. The scene was indeed "exactly like a picture." He admired it all so much that he felt braver than ever.

"Come hither, lad," said the glorious leader, when the men in Cromwellian steel caps had said a few low, eager words. And he took off his helmet, because he could not see properly with it on. He had a kind face and long, fair hair. "Have no fear—thou shalt take no scathe."

Robert was glad of that. He wondered what scathe was, and if it was nastier than the senna-tea which he had to take sometimes.

"Unfold thy tale without alarm," said the leader, kindly; "whence comest thou, and what is thine intent?"

"My what?" said Robert.



"ROBERT WAS DRAGGED FORTHWITH—BY THE RELUCTANT EAR."

"What seekest thou to accomplish? What is thine errand, that thou wanderest here alone among these rough men-at-arms? Poor child, thy mother's heart aches for thee e'en now, I'll warrant me."

He wiped away a manly tear, exactly as a leader in an historical romance would have done, and said:—

"Fear not to speak the truth, my child; thou hast naught to fear from Wulfric de Talbot."

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Robert had a wild feeling that this glorious leader of the besieging party, being himself part of a wish, would be able to understand better than Martha, or the gipsies, or the policeman in Rochester, or the clergyman of yesterday, the true tale of the wishes and the



"HE WIPED AWAY A MANLY TEAR."

psammead. The only difficulty was that he knew he could never remember enough "quothas" and "beshrew mes" and things like that to make his talk sound like the talk of a boy in an historical romance. However, he began boldly enough with a sentence straight out of "Ralph de Courcy; or, The Boy Crusader." He said:—

"Gramercy for thy courtesy, fair Sir Knight; the fact is, it's like this, and I hope you're not in a hurry, because the story's rather a breather. Father and mother are away, and when we were down playing in the sand-pits we found a psammead."

"I cry thee mercy! A sammyadd?" said the Knight.

"Yes—a sort of—of fairy, or enchanter—yes, that's it, an enchanter, and he said we could have a wish every day, and we wished to be beautiful."

"Thy wish was scarce granted," muttered one of the men-at-arms, looking at Robert, who went on as if he had not heard.

"And then we wished for money—treasure, you know—but we couldn't spend it. And yesterday we wished for wings and we got them, and we had a ripping time to begin with——"

"Thy speech is strange and uncouth," said Sir Wulfric de Talbot. "Repeat thy words—what hadst thou?"

"A ripping—I mean a jolly—no—we were contented with our lot, that's what I mean, only after that we got into an awful fix."

"What is a fix? A fray, mayhap?"

"No, not a fray. A—a—a tight place."

"A dungeon? Alas! for thy youthful fettered limbs," said the Knight, politely.

"It wasn't a dungeon. We just encountered undeserved misfortunes," Robert explained. "To-day we are punished by not being allowed to go out. "That's where I live"—he pointed to the castle—"the others are in there, and they're not allowed to go out. It's all the psammead's—I mean the enchanter's—fault. I wish we'd never seen him."

"He is an enchanter of might?"

"Oh, yes—of might and main!"

"And thou deemest that it is the spells of the enchanter whom thou hast angered that have lent strength to the besieging party," said the gallant leader; "but know thou that Wulfric de Talbot needs no enchanter's aid to lead his followers to victory."

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"No, I am sure you don't," said Robert, with hasty courtesy; "but all the same it's partly his fault, but we're most to blame. You couldn't have done anything if it hadn't been for us."

"How now, bold boy?" said Sir Wulfric, haughtily; "thy speech is dark and scarce courteous. Unravel me this riddle."

"Oh," said Robert, desperately, "of course you don't know it, but you're not real at all. You're only here because the others must have been idiots enough to wish for a castle, and when the sun sets you'll just vanish away and it'll be all right."

The captain and the men-at-arms exchanged glances—at first pitying, and then sterner as the longest-booted man said:—

"Beware, noble my lord; the urchin but feigns madness to escape from our clutches. Shall we not bind him?"

"I'm no more mad than you are," said Robert, angrily; "only I was an idiot to think you'd understand anything. Let me go—I haven't done anything to you."

"Whither?" asked the Knight, who seemed to have believed all the enchanter's story till it came to his own share in it. "Whither wouldst thou wend?"

"Home, of course." Robert pointed to the castle.

"To carry news of succour? Nay."

"All right, then," said Robert, struck by a sudden idea. "Then let me go somewhere else." His mind sought eagerly among the memories of the historical romance.

"Sir Wulfric de Talbot," he said, slowly, "should think foul scorn to—to keep a chap—I mean one who has done him no hurt—when he wants to cut off quietly—I mean to depart without violence."

"This to my face? Beshrew thee for a knave!" replied Sir Wulfric. Yet the appeal seemed to have gone home. "But thou sayest sooth. Go where thou wilt," headded, nobly, "thou art free. Wulfric de Talbot warreth not with babes. And Jakin here shall bear thee company."

"All right," said Robert, wildly. "Jakin will enjoy himself, I think. Come on, Jakin. Sir Wulfric, I salute thee."

He saluted after the modern military manner, and set off running to the sand-pit, Jakin's long boots keeping up easily. He found the fairy. He dug it up, he woke it up. He implored it to give him one more wish.

"I've done two to-day already," it grumbled, "and one was as stiff a bit of work as ever I did."

"Oh, do, do, do, do, do, *do*!" said Robert, while Jakin looked on with an expression of open-mouthed horror at the strange beast that talked and gazed with snails' eyes at him.

"Well, what is it?" snapped the psammead, with cross sleepiness.

"I wish I was with the others," said Robert. And the psammead began to swell. Robert lost consciousness for an instant. When he opened his eyes the others were crowding round him in a dark room, with thick stone walls and no furniture.

"We never heard you come in," they said. "How awfully jolly of you to wish it to give us our wish!"

"Of course, we understood that was what you'd done."

"But you ought to have told us. Suppose we'd wished something silly?"

"Silly?" said Robert, very crossly, indeed. "How



"'OH, DO, DO, DO, DO, DO!' SAID ROBERT."

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much sillier could you have been, I'd like to know? You nearly settled me, I can tell you."

Then he told his story, and the others admitted that it certainly had been rough on him. And they praised his courage and cleverness so much that he presently got back his lost temper and felt braver than ever and consented to be captain of the besieged force.

"We haven't done anything yet," said Anthea, comfortably; "we waited for you. We've collected a lot of daggers and stones and we're going to shoot at them through these little loopholes with the bow and arrows uncle gave you, and you shall have first shot."

"I don't think I'd begin," said Robert, cautiously. "You don't know how real they are. They won't attack till sunset; I heard Jakin say so. We can spend the day getting ready for the defence."

They explored the castle thoroughly—and really the day passed very pleasantly. It was hard to believe that there could be real danger. It was in the afternoon that they happened to be on the highest tower, whence they could see all round the castle, and could see, too, that beyond the moat on every side the tents of the besieging party were pitched. Rather uncomfortable shivers ran down the children's backs as they saw that all the men were very busy cleaning or sharpening their arms, restringing their bows, and polishing their shields. A large party came along the road with horses dragging along the great trunk of a tree, and Cyril felt quite pale because he knew this was for a battering-ram.

"What a good thing we've got a moat," he said, "and what a good thing the drawbridge is up! I should never have known how to work it."

"Of course it would be up in a besieged castle."

"You'd think there ought to have been soldiers in it, wouldn't you?" said Robert.

"You see, you don't know how long it's been besieged," said Cyril, darkly. "Perhaps most of the brave defenders were killed quite early in the siege and all the provisions eaten, and now there are only a few intrepid survivors—that's us—and we are going to defend it to the death."

"How do you begin? Defending to the death, I mean?" asked Anthea.

"We ought to be heavily armed, and then shoot at them when they advance to the attack, and drop stones on them, and daggers."

"They used to pour boiling lead down on besiegers when they got too close," said Anthea. "Father showed me the holes on purpose for pouring it down through at Bodiam Castle. And there are holes like it in the gate-tower here."

"I think I'm glad it's only a game. It *is* only a game, isn't it?" said Jane.

But no one had time to answer.

For suddenly there came the loud, fierce cry of a trumpet.

"You see it *is* real," said Robert, "and they are going to attack."

All rushed down again to the little dark room over the gate-house and looked out of the windows.

"Yes," said Robert, "they're all coming out of their tents and moving about like ants. There's that Jakin dancing about where the bridge joins on. I wish he could see me put my tongue out at him! Yah!"

The others were far too pale to wish to put their tongues out at anybody. They looked at Robert with surprised respect. Anthea said, "You really *are* brave, Robert."

And again the trumpet sounded.

"Rot!" Cyril's pallor turned to redness now, all in a minute. "He's been getting ready to be brave all the afternoon, and I wasn't ready, that's all. I shall be braver than he is in half a jiffy."

A trumpeter came forward to the edge of the moat and blew the longest and loudest blast they had yet heard. When the blaring noise had died away a man who was with the trumpeter shouted:—

"What ho, within there!" And his voice came plainly to the garrison in the gate-house.

"Halloa, there!" Robert bellowed back at once.

"In the name of our Lord the King, and of our good Lord and trusty leader, Sir Wulfric de Talbot, we summon this castle to surrender—on pain of fire and sword and no quarter. Do ye surrender?"

"No!" bawled Robert, "of course we don't! Never, never, never!"

The man answered back:—

"Then your fate be on your own heads."

"Cheer," said Robert, in a fierce whisper; "cheer to show them we aren't afraid, and rattle the daggers to make more noise. One, two, three! Hip, hip, hooray! Again, Hip, hip, hooray! One more, Hip, hip, hooray!" The cheers were rather high and weak, but the rattle of the daggers lent them strength and depth.

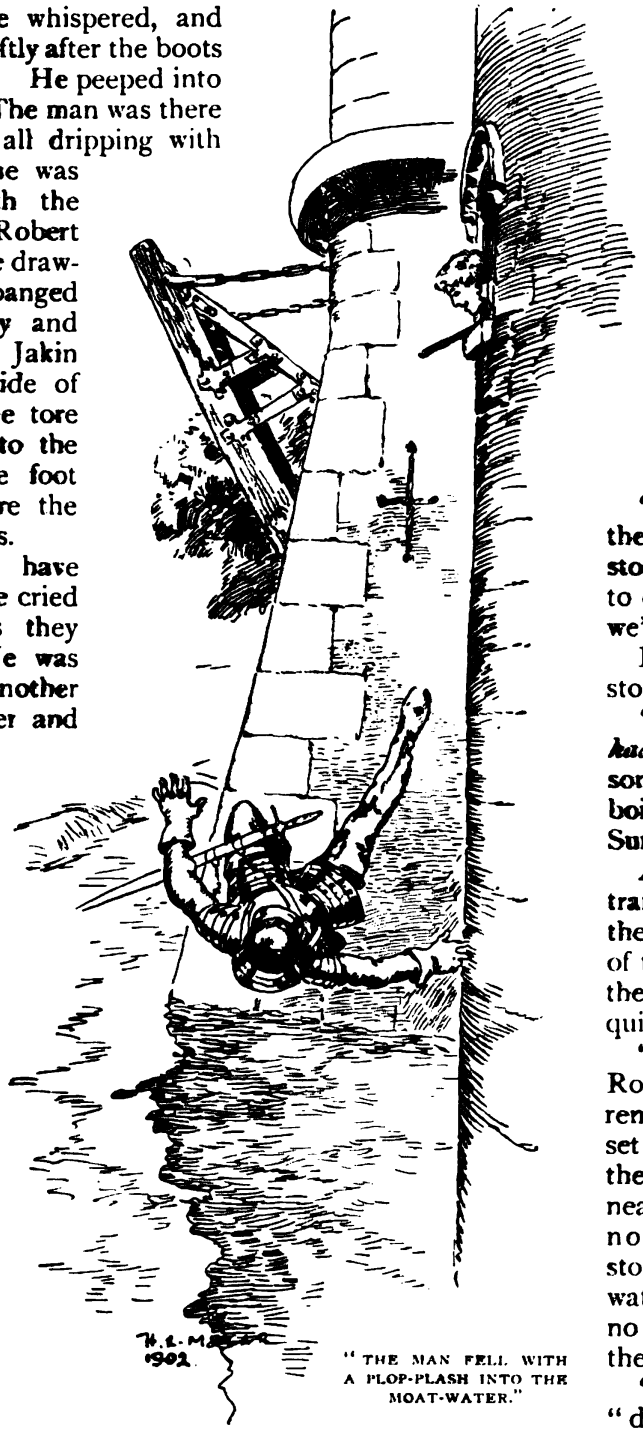
And as the cheers died away Robert heard

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feet on the stairs outside—heavy feet and the clank of steel. No one breathed for a moment. The steel and the feet went on up the turret stairs. Then Robert sprang softly to the door. He pulled off his shoes.

"Wait here," he whispered, and stole quickly and softly after the boots and the spur clank. He peeped into the upper room. The man was there and it was Jakin, all dripping with moat-water, and he was fiddling about with the machinery which Robert felt sure worked the drawbridge. Robert banged the door suddenly and bolted it just as Jakin sprang to the inside of the door. Then he tore downstairs and into the little turret at the foot of the tower, where the biggest window was.

"We ought to have defended *this*!" he cried to the others, as they followed him. He was just in time. Another man had swum over and his fingers were on the window-ledge. Robert never knew how the man had managed to climb up out of the water. But he saw the clinging fingers and hit them as hard as he could with an iron bar that he caught up from the floor. The man fell with a plop-plash into the moat-water. In another moment Robert was outside the little room, had banged its door, and was shooting home the enormous bolts and calling to Cyril to lend a hand.



"THE MAN FELL WITH A PLOP-PLASH INTO THE MOAT-WATER."

Then they stood in the arched gateway, breathing hard and looking at each other.

There was a creaking above, and then something rattled and shook—the pavement they stood on seemed to tremble. Then a crash told them that the drawbridge had been lowered to its place.

And now the drawbridge rang and echoed hollowly to the hoofs of horses and the tramp of armed men.

"Up, quick," cried Robert; "let's drop things on them."

Even the girls were feeling almost brave now. They followed Robert quickly, and under his directions began to drop stones out through the long, narrow windows. There was a confused noise below and some groans.

"Oh, dear," said Anthea, putting down the stone she was just going to drop out. "I'm afraid we've hurt somebody!"

Robert caught up the stone in a fury.

"I should just hope we *had*!" he said. "I'd give something for a jolly good boiling kettle of lead. Surrender, indeed!"

And now came more tramping and a pause, and then the thundering thump of the battering-ram. And the little room was almost quite dark.

"We've held it," cried Robert; "we *won't* surrender! The sun *must* set in a minute. Here, they're all jawing underneath again. Pity there's no time to get more stones! Here, pour that water down on them. It's no good, of course, but they'll hate it."

"Oh, dear," said Jane, "don't you think we'd better surrender?"

"Never!" said Robert. "We'll have a parley, if you like, but we'll never surrender. Oh, I'll be a soldier when I grow up, you just see if I don't. I won't go into the Civil Service, whatever anyone says."

"Let's wave a handkerchief and ask for a

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parley," Jane pleaded. "I don't believe the sun's going to set to-night at all."

"Give them the water first, the brutes," said the bloodthirsty Robert. So Anthea tilted the pot over the nearest lead-hole and poured. They heard a splash below, but no one below seemed to have felt it. And again the ram battered the great door. Anthea paused.

"How idiotic!" said Robert, lying flat on the floor and putting one eye to the lead-hole; "of course, the holes go straight down into the gate-house—that's for when the enemy has got past the door and the portcullis and almost all is lost. Here, hand me the pot——". He crawled into the three-cornered window-ledge in the middle of the wall, and taking the pot from Anthea poured the water out through the arrow-slit. And as he began to pour the noise of the battering-ram and the trampling of the foe and the shouts of "Surrender!" and "Talbot for ever!" all suddenly stopped and went out like the snuff of a candle, the little dark room seemed to whirl round and turn topsy-turvy, and when the children came to themselves, there they were, safe and sound, in the big front bedroom of their own house—the house with the ornamental iron top to the roof. They all crowded to the window and looked out. The moat and the tents and the besieging force were gone, and there was the garden with its tangle of dahlias and marigolds and asters and late roses, and the spiky iron railings and the quiet white road.



"ANTHEA TILTED THE POT OVER THE NEAREST LEAD-HOLE."

Everyone drew a deep breath.

"And that's all right!" said Robert; "I told you so! And I say — we didn't surrender, did we?"

"Aren't you glad now I wished for a castle?" asked Cyril.

"I think I am *now*," said Anthea, slowly. "But I wouldn't wish for it again, I think."

"Oh, it was simply splendid," said Jane, unexpectedly. "I wasn't frightened a bit."

"Oh, I say!" Cyril was beginning — but Anthea stopped him.

"Look here," she said, "it's just come into my head. This is the very first thing we've wished for that hasn't got us into a row. And there hasn't been the least little scrap of a row about this. Nobody's raging downstairs, we're safe and sound—we've had an awfully jolly day—at least, not jolly exactly, but you know what I mean. And we know now how brave Robert is — and Cyril, too, of course," she added, hastily, "and Jane as well. And we haven't got into a row with a single grown-up."

The door was opened suddenly and fiercely.

"You ought to be ashamed of yourselves," said the voice of Martha, and they could tell by her voice that she was very angry indeed; "I thought you couldn't last through the day without getting up to some dodgery! A person can't take a breath of air on the front door-step but you must be emptying the wash-hand jug on to their heads! Off you go to bed, the lot of you, and try to get up better children in the morning. Now, then, don't let me have to tell you twice. If I find any of you not in bed in ten minutes I'll let you know it, that's all. A new cap and everything. Off you go!"

And off they went. And that was the end of the besieged castle.

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Dickens as an Artist.

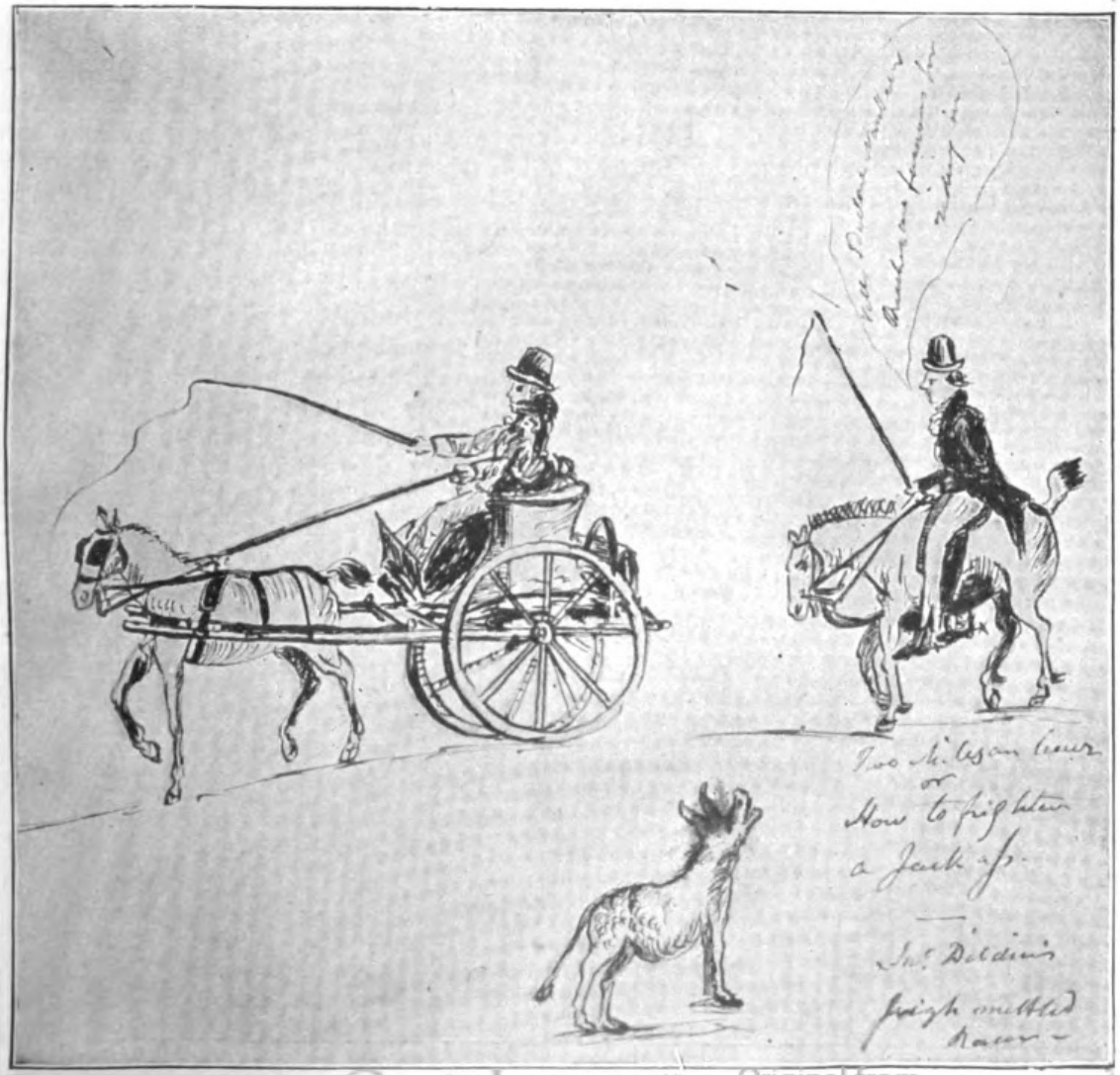
By Leonard W. Lillingston.

DICKENS'S illustrators had a by no means easy time of it. His requirements were exacting even beyond what is ordinary between author and artist. He was apt, as he himself said, "to build up temples in his mind not always makable with hands." A passage in his biography goes farther than that. We are assured that the great novelist himself said that he was invariably disappointed in the illustrations. So much disappointed was he, according to another authority, that he would have preferred his books to have been published without them!

May not the true explanation of this disappointment be found in the three drawings by Dickens which accompany this article? His fingers itched, even though more or less unconsciously, to do the work himself.

There is nothing in these sketches to indicate a pronounced artistic inaptitude. Upon some of us all the drawing-lessons in the world would be thrown away. These, crude as they are, betray no such disability. And as to their crudity, it should be remembered that they are, on the face of it, sketches and not finished drawings—an entirely different matter.

The portfolio of any professed artist would yield a crop of first designs almost as primitive in execution as these of Dickens.



"TWO MILES AN HOUR!"

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But I do not propose to set up that Dickens was a great artist, only to suggest that he was not wanting in the artistic sense. We are enabled to fix the date approximately of one of these sketches at least, that which includes "Mr. Dibdin's High-Mettled Racer."

This highly popular song of Dibdin's was published in 1831, with ten illustrations by Robert Cruikshank. It must have enjoyed an uncommon vogue, which probably lasted for some years. The great Ducrow staged an equestrian entertainment entitled "The High-Mettled Racer; or, the Life, Death, and Restoration of the Favourite Hunter," in which his celebrated Hanoverian horse, Brigand, played the title-rôle. The song is as poor a piece of versification as Dibdin ever perpetrated, and he perpetrated many; it is, perhaps, a little difficult at this date to understand its more than transient popularity. But it was a sporting song, and if we are a nation of sportsmen now, we were still more so then. The sketch was probably made between 1831 and 1837—that is, either shortly before or at the same time with the publication of "Sketches by Boz."

We may at once acquit Dickens of any unfulfilled intention of drawing an ideal steed. Does he not himself refer disparagingly to the animal in the description beneath—"Two Miles an Hour; or, How to Frighten a Jackass"? By the way, the jackass is, perhaps, the least like to nature of them all. I am constrained to admit that at first sight it favours a hyena more than a jackass. The equestrian, too, must have his joke, or it would not be Dickens. "Vell, I declare," says he, "nankeen breeches are famous for riding in." Mr. Percy Fitzgerald has hinted at the probability that our descendants will have to read "Pickwick" with a glossary at their elbow. It is quite likely. And here is another proof of its likelihood; for evidently this was some subtle satire of the time on the Cockney equestrian and his nankeen breeches. Alas, that time should have so dulled the point of it! By the way, the artist evidently had in mind the last line of verse three of the song, which runs: "The high-mettled racer's a hack on the road."

I am inclined to think that the steed between the shafts is the better one. One need say no more of the pair behind the shafts except that they look "all werry jolly and comfortable." The conveyance, I suppose, might be described as a kind—of a sort—of a phaeton. For myself I can think of Dickens in connection with only one conveyance, "the neatest, pwettiest, gwacefullest thing that ever wan upon wheels—painted wed, with a cweam piebald," the property of Lord Mutanhed.

The second word in the text accompanying the next drawing has, I must confess, proved somewhat puzzling. Having spent several hours in trying to decipher it to my satisfaction, I am, perforce, obliged to leave the final solution of the problem to the readers of THE STRAND MAGAZINE. An expert in autographs, and in the Dickens autograph in particular, leans to the view that the title is "The 2 Faquirs and the Ducks." True, the spelling of "fakir" varies a good deal, as the dictionaries witness. But are these gentlemen below intended for fakirs? I should rather suggest that they are Red Indians; their head-gear alone seems to me sufficiently convincing.

For the rest the expression on the features of the one in front—we only see him in profile, remember—appears to be intended to convey the intensest indignation and surprise. "And that Duck," he says, "holds the Soul of my Mother." The face of his companion, on the other hand, wears a smirk of cynical indifference as though he had long since outgrown such "a creed outworn" as



"THE FAKIRS AND THE DUCKS."

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that of the transmigration of souls, and had been merely egging on his comrade into a theological discussion. Viewed in this light his "My father inhabits that Drake" is a mere piece of hypocrisy. The miller, with his stick firmly planted on the ground, and breathing an air of defiance in general, is quite indifferent to the doctrine of transmigration. "You may claim their *Souls*," says he, "But you don't do me out of their *Bodies*."

The third and last sketch is, as a drawing, perhaps the least interesting of the three; but in another sense it far surpasses the others in interest, for in the left-hand corner of the sketch are the initials of the artist. They are a quite characteristic Dickens autograph, as, indeed, is the autograph throughout all three. The "C" and "D" of this particular sketch are, however, especially noteworthy. The Cheesewring is, of course, well known to visitors to Cornwall as one of its many Druidical remains. The name is said to be derived from the shape, suggesting a cheese-press. The Cheesewring consists of six stones superimposed one upon another. The top one was formerly, in all probability, a "Logan" or rocking-stone, now out of equipoise. The pile is about 32ft. high.



THE CHEESEWRING.

I cannot find any trace of Dickens having visited Cornwall prior to the famous excursion in 1843, when he was accompanied by Clarkson Stanfield, Maclise, and Forster. "It was such an unexpected and continued attraction for us," writes Forster, "that we were well into the third week of absence before we turned our faces homeward. Railways helped us then not much, but where the roads were inaccessible to post-horses we walked." And Dickens himself wrote to his friend Felton: "Placid star of morning! While yet the glow of its enjoyment was upon me. Such a trip as we had into Cornwall just after Longfellow went away. . . . Sometimes we travelled all night, sometimes all day." It is possible that Dickens sketched the stone on this trip. But I am inclined to the belief that he did not, and that the three sketches were made about the same time. And he may well have been to Cornwall before. Or, again, it is not unlikely that the Cheesewring was copied from one of the many engravings of it in existence, then as now.

It remains to be said that Alfred Bryan, the artist, whose letter accompanies the drawings, apart from other connection with Dickens and his work, himself drew a series of full-length studies of the principal characters from Dickens.

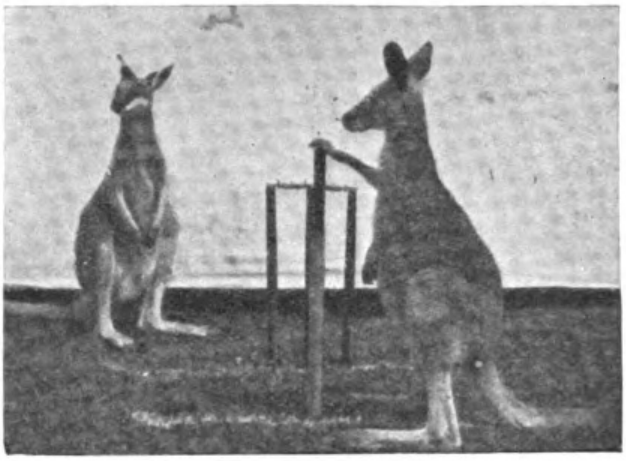
The photographs are directly reproduced from the original drawings now in the possession of Mr. W. T. Spencer, of 27, New Oxford Street, the well-known Dickens expert, by whose courtesy they were placed at the disposal of the writer for the purposes of this article. They are so far unique, for no other Dickens drawings have as yet been discovered.

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*Curiosities.**

[We shall be glad to receive Contributions to this section, and to pay for such as are accepted.]

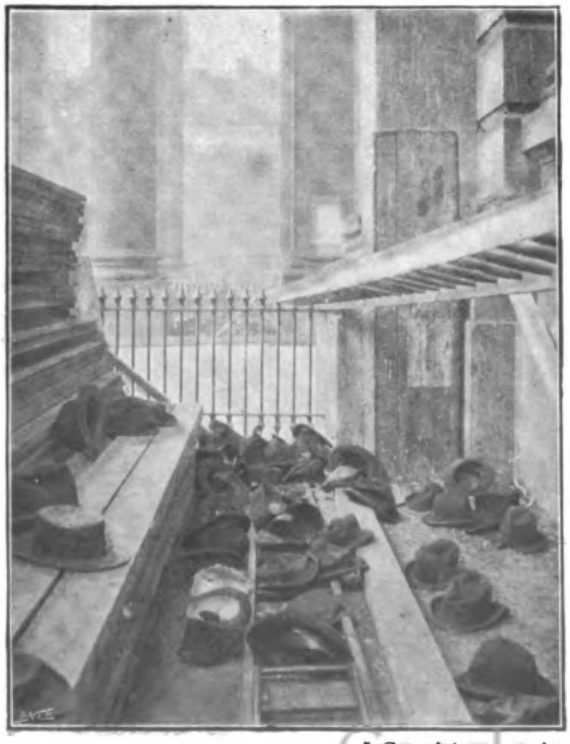
CRICKETING KANGAROOS.



"The two pet kangaroos shown here belong to a constable in Caboolture, Queensland, who has trained them as cricketers. The photo. was taken by Mr. Ranking, one of the stipendiary magistrates of Brisbane, who describes them as two typical members of an Australian eleven." — Mr. W. S. Paul, Royal Colonial Institute, Northumberland Avenue.

"PEACE HATS."

"The accompanying photograph represents a number of hats collected by the police from the open space in front of the London Royal Exchange on Peace Monday, June 2nd. On that morning enthusiastic crowds blocked the streets around the Exchange and Mansion House, with the result that traffic had to be suspended for the time. Not content with waving flags, shouting, and singing, to celebrate the good news of the war being over, some gentlemen were seen throwing their silk hats into the air, while others, wishful to retain their own headgear, showed their enthusiasm by removing and flinging up other people's hats. After the crowd had somewhat dispersed the battered tiles were taken in charge by the police, and are here shown in their cell under the portico of the Royal Exchange." — Mr. Herbert E. Grubb, 18, West Street, Bromley, Kent.





AN ENORMOUS FLEECE.

"Here is a photograph of an immense fleece of Irish wool, shorn near this town. I have photographed it hanging on an old tree, after the manner of the Golden Fleece at Colchis, and Jason (on a ladder) is employed in holding it in position. The fact that both he and his ladder are completely covered will give some idea of the size of this fleece." —Mr. H. W. Smith, Moutrie, Athlone, Ireland.

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WHICH WAY IS HE GOING?

"Here is an extremely interesting optical illusion. The horseman in the picture appears to be riding in either direction. As a matter of fact, however, the photo. was taken from behind."—Mr. H. C. Barton, 20, Vanbrugh Park, Blackheath, S.E.



WHEN A BALLOON BURSTS.

"This photograph illustrates the bursting of a hot-air balloon. While the photographer was about to photograph this balloon, just before the intended ascent, it ruptured, emitting the volumes of black smoke and gas so well shown in the photograph. This balloon had



been used by the aeronaut a great many times for the purpose of giving ascents at the various county fairs, and from the great number of patches one would conclude that the huge bag had ruptured or had been rent many times. This bursting of the balloon occurred on the Fair grounds at Chagrin Falls."—Mr. Chas. J. Aldrich, M.D., 612, Prospect Street, Cleveland, Ohio.

PICTURE TYPEWRITING.

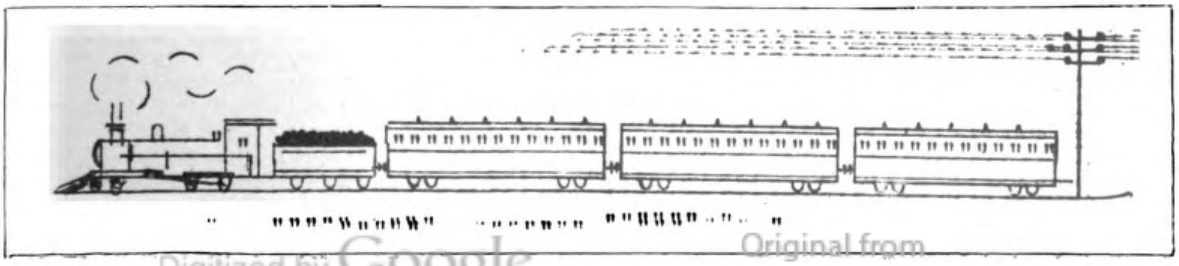
"I send you the sketch of an engine, tender, and three coaches drawn by myself entirely with a Remington typewriter, not a stroke of any kind being added by hand. For those not familiar with the typewriter, I will explain that: (1) the general outline is a continuation to various lengths of the '—' (dash) used in underlining, the different angles being produced by shifting the paper in the machine; (2) the windows and buffers are inverted commas; (3) the wheels and roof-lamps were formed by placing a strip of paper over the carriage body and striking 'O' and 'A' respectively in such a manner as to show only a portion of each letter in the drawing; (4) the dome of the engine is an inverted 'U'; (5) six brackets in different positions indicate steam; (6) the somewhat excessive quantity of coal in the tender is a composition of 'dashes' and 'full stops'; and, lastly, the telegraph wires and posts are made of dots and dashes."—Mr. Ernest G. Denning, 2, Dean Street, Cape Town.

HOW A SHAFT WENT THROUGH A POST.

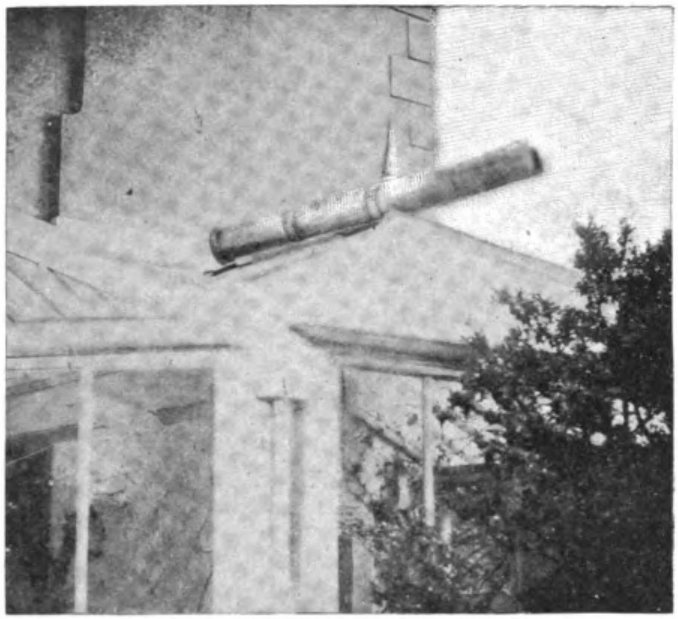
"This photograph shows the bottom of a telegraph post through which a hole is pierced. This was done by a runaway team a month or two ago. One horse went each side of the post, and the end of the shaft came down before they got to the post. The shaft went 4ft. through the post, and had to be pulled out backwards by the team. Neither of the



horses was injured, and, strange to say, the shaft was not damaged in the slightest degree, but is still in use. The post is also almost as good as ever."—Mr. B. L. La Roy, Coldwater, Ont.



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LUCKY FOR THE GREENHOUSE.

"This picture illustrates a curious accident that happened here recently. This tin chimney-pot, about 7ft. long, fell a distance of 25ft. on to the spike of the conservatory, which pierced it right through, not a pane of glass being cracked or the house otherwise injured."—Mrs. Remfry, Firsleigh, Torquay.

A SHATTERED SUPERSTITION.

"There is a superstition among the cowboys of the Western United States that a rattlesnake will not cross a hair lariat. That is one of the reasons that a lariat made of hair is a prized possession. The plains of Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, and California are infested with rattlesnakes, and the cowboy who spreads his blanket for a night's rest is liable to awaken and find a bedfellow in the person of a rattler, attracted by the warmth of his body. The cowboy who is fortunate enough to possess a hair lariat seeks the earth couch with a feeling of security, for he encircles his bed with coils of the hair rope, trusting in the efficacy of the charm to keep away his deadly enemy. Not long ago a 'tenderfoot' arrived at the ranch of a large cattle-owner in Arizona. He came there to study Nature and the ways of the festive cowboy. He brought his camera with him for purposes of his own. He heard of the superstition connected with the hair lariat, and expressed doubts regarding its effectiveness as a protector from snakes. He determined to put the matter to a test, however, so taking a couple of white rats he anchored them near a rattlesnake's den as bait with which to coax the snakes from the rocks. Around the rats he coiled the hair lariat, and later, when the rattlers had crawled from their den, he bombarded them with stones. Then he used the camera. He secured indisputable evidence that the lariat is not a bar to the progress of the rattlesnake."—Mr. Arthur J. Burdick, 123, North Broadway, Los Angeles, California.

NOT A PROFESSIONAL GIANT.

"Edward Beaupre, a young French giant, is 7ft. 11in. high and weighs 360lb. His neck is 2ft. around, his hands from wrist to middle finger-tip are 12½in., his shoes are No. 22, and from tip to tip of outstretched hands he measures 100in. The giant's early life was spent with his people at Willow Bunch, North-West Territory. Of late years he has led the life of a cowboy and ranch hand in Montana, where he was 'discovered.' Beaupre has never been on exhibition, and has no desire to be. He was of age January 9th last. He is French, and speaks that language fluently. His people were country folks, and of no more than average dimensions. From babyhood, however, he was a monster. Beginning his unusual growth at three, in nine years he was 6ft. 6in. high, and at seventeen had reached the 7ft. 1in. mark. He has not yet ceased to grow. Last year he added 1½in. to his stature." — Mr. M. W. Newberry, Press Club, San Francisco.

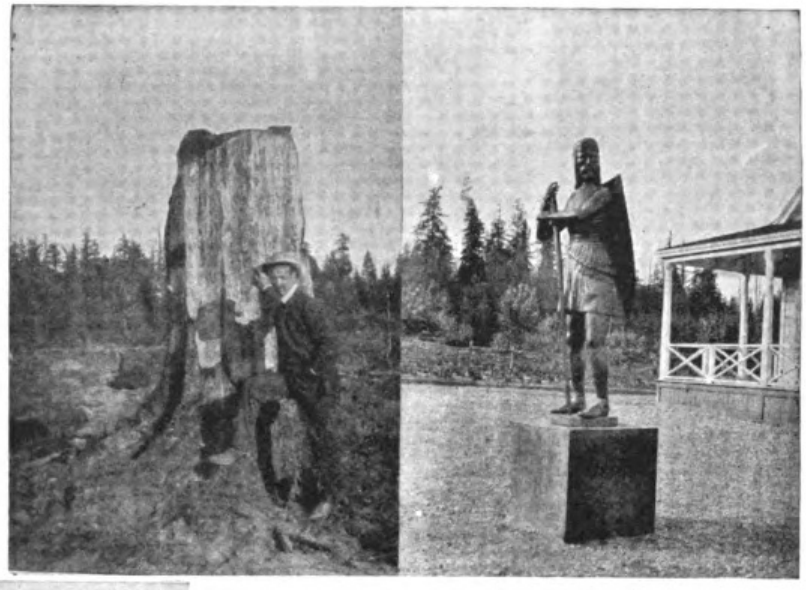




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A CURIOUS WOODEN STATUE.

"The cedar stump shown in my first photo. was carved into the statue shown in the second by Mr. George Stewart, a patriotic Scot of seventy-six years of age, at Bonnie Brae Farm, South Saanich, B.C., and represents Sir William Wallace, the hero of Scotland. It is 6ft. 6in. in height from the top of the pedestal, which, according to tradition, was the height of this redoubtable warrior."—Mr. J. W. Stewart, P.O. Box 480, Victoria, B.C.



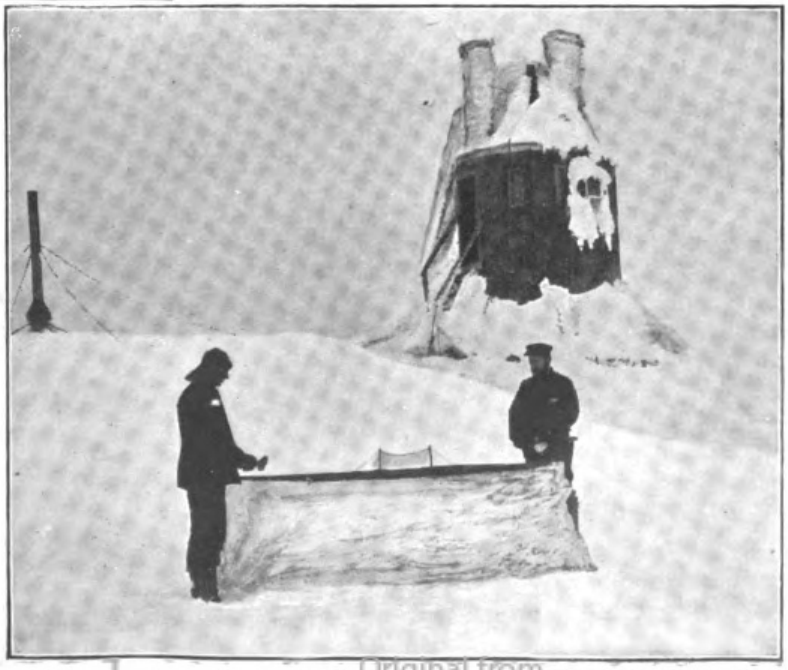
"LEACC."

"The accompanying photograph is of a restaurant at Felixstowe, owned by a certain Mr. Stokes, who may be seen in the picture enjoying his morning paper outside his establishment. Being an enterprising man, he painted the words on the side of the house himself. For over a year past the mysterious word 'LEACC' was a source of wonder to the inhabitants and visitors of Felixstowe. Determined, however, to solve the problem, I waylaid the youthful scion of the house of Stokes and asked him the explanation. He replied that his father intended to put up 'CYCLE ACCOMMODATION,' and had begun in the middle, leaving no space between the end of 'cycle' and the beginning of 'accommodation.' Apparently daunted by the magnitude of the task, and remembering the proverbial brevity of life, he relinquished it. His unfinished sign has, however, proved a better advertisement to him than could have done the most elaborate example of the sign-painter's talent." — Mr. F. P. Walker, King's School, Canterbury.



PING-PONG AT ITS GREATEST HEIGHT.

"This photograph, taken in mid-winter at the highest point in His Majesty's home domains, shows two of the meteorologists enjoying a game of ping-pong alongside the observatory on the summit of Ben Nevis. The photo. was taken when the snow reached an average depth of 7ft., and during the progress of the game the temperature was as low as 18deg. Fahr. The table, composed as it was of a solid block of snow, covered with baize, served its purpose admirably, and the game, if not played under the most favourable climatic conditions, can at least boast of 'high' scoring."—Mr. Robert H. Macdougall, Ben Nevis Observatory.



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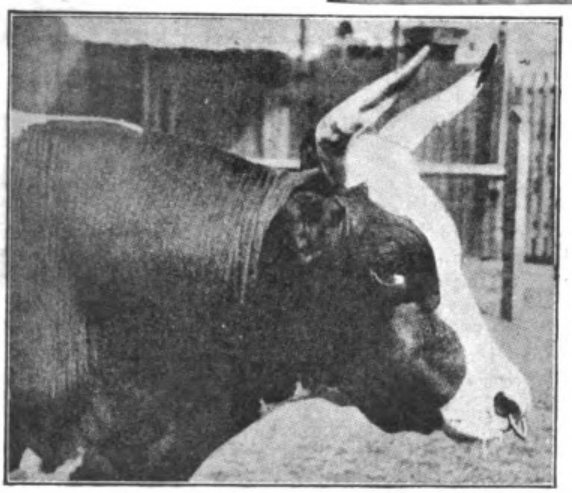
A NOVEL SPEAKING-TUBE.

"The pump shown in the accompanying photo. has a double use, for in addition to obtaining water from it our friend also uses it as a speaking-tube, and is able to carry on conversation with his wife in a distant part of the house." — Mr. A. M. Bexfield, 6, Victoria Place, Grosvenor, Bath.



AN ILLUSION IN BLACK AND WHITE.

"I send you a cutting from the *Melbourne Australasian;* it is considered curious in regard to the markings on the



cow's face and body, which clearly represent a young hippo calf, while the horns look like the legs of an acrobat turning a somersault."—Mr. G. Chitty-Baker, Box 123, G.P.O., Perth, W.A.

A QUEER BRIDGE.

"The accompanying photograph shows a man apparently walking on water. In reality he is crossing a special form of wire bridge, consisting of three iron or steel wires, two close together forming a footway, and one 4ft. or 5ft. higher taking the place of a hand-rail. This bridge, which is specially adapted for small streams, has the advantages that it cannot be swept away by a flood and is inexpensive. Some care has to be exercised in crossing, as one cannot proceed forwards in the usual manner, but must sidle across, balancing oneself by means of the third wire. The photograph was taken on the Esk, near Loch Lee, Glen Esk, Kincardineshire, Scotland."—Mr. William G. Melvin, 136, Hamilton Place, Aberdeen.



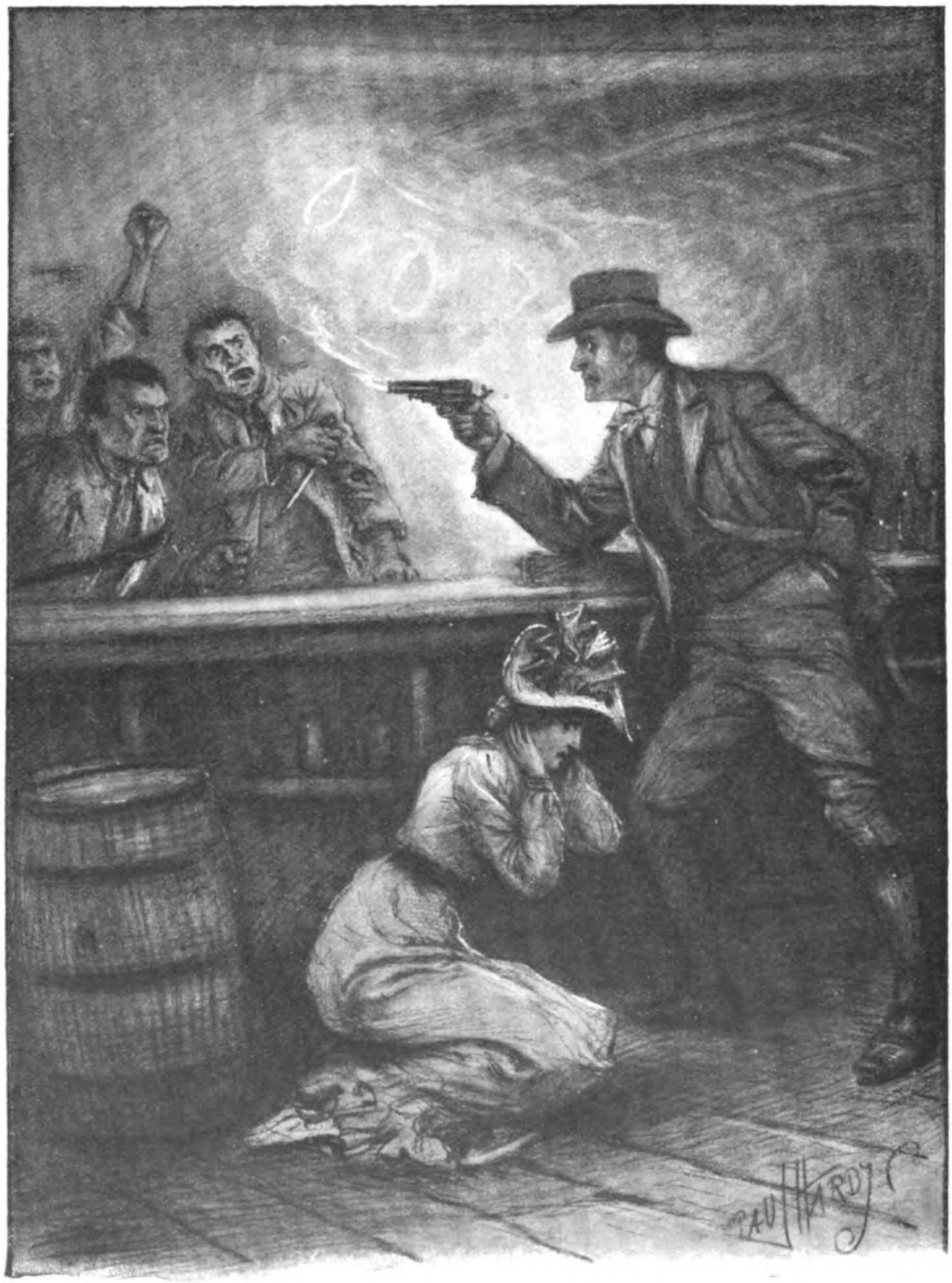
A WEDDING-DRESS OF TEETH.

"Among the American Indians the teeth of the elk have a reputation for bringing good luck. O. L. Richards, of El Reno, Oklahoma, has a robe or dress ornamented with over 1,000 of the teeth, which is probably the only one of the kind in the United States. It is said to have been made nearly a century ago by squaws of the Cheyenne tribe, and over forty of these women have worn it while being married to the warrior of their choice, as it was supposed to bring future happiness. The photograph shows Mr. Richards attired in the dress. The teeth are so rare that they are extremely valuable, being worth nearly ten shillings each. The garment shown is ornamented with 1,024 of them."—Mr. D. A. Willey, Baltimore.



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"'GENTLEMEN,' HE SAID, 'THIS IS A SIX-SHOOTER."

(*See page* 247.)

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THE STRAND MAGAZINE.

Vol. xxiv. SEPTEMBER, 1902. No. 141.



AT THE SIGN OF THE THREE SNAKES.

By R. E. Vernede.

IT was only about five o'clock on an October afternoon, yet Mr. Weatherly Gilliat had just come to the conclusion that he was lost. All around him the moors stretched, uphill and down, and the purple and yellow of the gorse and heather, that had only recently begun to turn to an autumnal brown, were at this comparatively early hour being merged rapidly in the grey of a mist. Mr. Gilliat had calculated on finding some village or habitation before dusk, and the mist had turned things dusky an hour too early. Not that it greatly mattered. He was travelling at his leisure where the road took him, and the discovery that one could be lost in England merely gave him a higher opinion of the country. He had not conceived it possible.

He was a young man, slight and well-made, with the lazy, capable look characteristic of some Americans. Anyone would have taken him for at least as good as he was—an engineer on his holidays—despite the carelessness of his attire. That one need not dress on the moors was what Mr. Gilliat was thinking at that moment. "Suit-case at Clovelly," he murmured to himself, "wherever Clovelly may be. I imagine I'll strike some cottage hereabouts." He felt in his jacket-pocket to make sure he hadn't dropped his tooth-brush. It was there all right, mixed up with his revolver. The revolver was a

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fad of Mr. Weatherly Gilliat's, having once been a necessity out West. A man who could win a prize for revolver-shooting at a cowboys' sports has got accustomed to carrying a six-shooter. Mr. Gilliat hardly noticed his. If he had ever needed it his fingers could have closed on it and fired in about the same time as it takes most men to put their hands in their pockets. So far he had only used it to shoot a swimming vole from the opposite bank of a stream for the edification of an old-world river inspector.

He was high up on the moors when he decided to try and strike a cottage; and in pursuance of that object he set out with long strides. The set of the moor was towards a valley hid by trees, and it was just under the first of the trees that he caught sight of someone ahead of him.

"Hi!" shouted Mr. Gilliat.

The person stopped, and he quickened his steps.

"Can you tell me, now——" he began, and stopped himself.

It was not a farm labourer, as he had imagined, but a young lady. Not even a dairy-maid. He could tell that even in the half light. She was very simply dressed and carried something in her hand. Under the curved straw hat was a very pretty face with an unmistakable air of dignity, though a little troubled perhaps.

"Yes?" she said, inquiringly.

"I beg your pardon," said Mr. Gilliat, lifting his hat. "I imagine I must have startled you."

"Not at all."

Dignity struggled with perturbation as she spoke.

"I thought——" He hesitated. He could not very well say that he thought she was a farm hand. "It's a poor light, and"—he continued—"I believed I might ask you for a direction."

No one can be more chivalrous in his manner than an American, and the girl's perturbation vanished while he spoke. She even smiled, not being so concerned about her dignity.

"I quite understand," she said. "I wish I could help you; but the fact is I'm just beginning to think that I've lost my own way. I'm—I'm really very much afraid I have."

It came in a burst of confidence, the latter part of the speech, and revealed the cause of her anxiety.

"I'm most sorry," he hastened to reply.

"It's dreadful, isn't it?" she said, trying to make light of it. "All my own fault, too. But we've only just come here. My aunt has taken rooms at a cottage, and I came out to paint, but in what direction I came from I really don't know."

"It's the moor's fault," said Mr. Gilliat, seriously; "the monotony. I might say I have travelled a good deal, but I'm outside my direction now."

"Then we're both lost," she said. "Oh, dear!"

She stood there, the picture of perplexity. Unusually graceful perplexity, too, Mr. Gilliat



"'THEN WE'RE BOTH LOST, SHE SAID."

thought, and made haste to assure her that there could be no possible difficulty in rediscovering her road. Perhaps she would permit him to make inquiries on her behalf.

"But—where?" she said.

"The nearest house I can strike."

"It will be taking you out of your way?"

Mr. Gilliat explained his circumstances. He had no way in particular, and in any event would deem it an honour if he might assist her.

"Well, you may," she said, "if you can. The village I came from is called Berley, that I know; but I must have walked four or five miles, without thinking about the time, before I began to paint. Whether

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Berley lies north or south or east or west, I really haven't a notion now. I've been walking about for nearly an hour to try and find someone to ask."

"Have you been this way?" The young man pointed down into the valley.

"No."

"It looks as good as any other?"

"Quite."

"Let us try, then."

They walked on together. The trees cleared very soon, and the prickly gorse began again. Exchanging names, Mr. Gilliat found that he was walking with Miss Trethewy, and that she lived in London. He confessed—not without pride—that he was an American.

"Then you've never been on these moors before?"

"Nothing like them. They're prickly."

The gorse was very prickly, and it was mainly for his companion that Mr. Gilliat felt it. He wondered that she made so little fuss, and was longing to tell her so when they came on to a broad, rugged track. Just ahead of them in an angle of the valley stood a house.

"I shall be able to get back before my aunt is frightened, after all," said Miss Trethewy, seeing it, "if you will be kind enough to ask them the way."

"But you must drive," insisted the young man; "you'll be losing your way again." He was beginning to take a personal interest in the matter, and could not bear to think of her wandering through those prickly, desolate places alone. "You will let me drive you back?"

Miss Trethewy considered. To tell the truth, she would very gladly be driven, for she was feeling a little nervous. Besides, it would be ungracious to refuse, and her aunt's alarm if she were later than the dinner-hour would be rememberable.

"If you can get a trap," she said, "I think I should be very much obliged."

"I believe I'll go in and ask," said Mr. Gilliat.

It was not until he had made the offer that the American noticed the appearance of the house, and when he did his face fell. It hardly looked as if it could stable a trap, so remote and ramshackle was its appearance. A sign-board with the sign beaten out of it by time and weather proclaimed that it was an inn, the lettering, so far as Mr. Gilliat could figure it up, running to the name of "The Three Snakes." But the windows were shuttered and the door barred, and the weedy path that went along the entrance might have been untrodden for fifty years.

"Nice old-world English hotel," said Mr. Gilliat, thoughtfully, surveying the blank establishment. "Wants white-washing." A lean fowl scuttled away into the gorse as he spoke and, somewhere at the back, a pig grunted mournfully. "I believe this'll be the bar."

He beat lustily on the worm-eaten door.

"Perhaps it's uninhabited," suggested Miss Trethewy.

"I imagine not. Heard someone sipping a mint-julep," returned the American, with his ear to the keyhole. "Deaf, I dare say." Again he battered. There was a shuffling of feet inside, followed by the steps of someone slowly advancing to the door.

"No hurry," shouted Mr. Gilliat, annoyed by the extreme tardiness of the approach. "Don't break your legs running. Have another drink first. We're all in England."

He apologized to the girl for his sarcasms at the expense of her country, while the person inside fumbled at the fastenings.

"They are very slow here," she admitted. "Oh!"

The exclamation was due to the appearance of the landlord. It might have been the curious light of the tallow candle that he carried in one hand which gave him so unpleasant an appearance, but certainly it was enough to make her shrink back. He was not unlike a lean fowl himself, bald, and skinny-fingered, and his cheeks hung in pouches. He had the most rascally small eyes—lidless and very peering. He seemed to take them in at a glance, and gibbered some unintelligible dialect to someone behind him, evidently.

"Don't mention it," said Mr. Gilliat, affably; "I'll get out my dictionary next time I come along. But, say, mister, do you keep a cart?"

"What you'm want?" The old man settled himself to a kind of English.

"That's right," said Mr. Gilliat, encouragingly. "We want something right straight away. Not so much a tombstone, as you might be imagining from our coming here—though it looks a fine place for a cemet-urry—but a cart. Got a cart?"

"We're very anxious to drive to Berley—at once," supplemented Miss Trethewy. The old man directed his attention from Mr. Gilliat, whom he did not seem to understand, to the girl.

"You'm wishing to drive t' Berley?" he asked. "You're strange to thiccy parts?"

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"That's it," said Mr. Gilliat. "Vurry strange. Say, have you got a cart?"

"Iss, iss," said the old man. He shouted something behind him again, and motioned them to come in. Alone, the girl would not have entered for a fortune, but Mr. Gilliat's ease inspired her.

"It won't be long, will it?" she said, appealingly, as they entered.

The landlord was sidling along ahead of them, the candle throwing little splashes of light on the discoloured interior. She went on:—

"Because this is such a horrid place. You—you won't go away?"

The American turned to her cheerfully.

"Not much," he said. "I'm sorry it's so poor here. But that cart'll be the quickest thing to get you home, Miss Trethewy; I'll tell him to hurry."

The old man had ushered them into a sort of bare tap-room, and he set down the candle on the counter. Mr. Gilliat hastened to offer the girl a chair, and that done he rounded on the landlord, who was staring at them.

"Run along now and get out that four-in-hand. We're strange to these parts, as you say, but we don't want to get used to them. They ain't picturesque enough — nothing historical. Anyway, we want that trap in about three minutes. See?"

"Iss, iss." The old man slunk away, disturbed by Mr. Gilliat's pertinacity.

"I hope he won't be long," repeated Miss Trethewy; "I feel perfectly frightened."

He consoled her jokingly. For his own part he thought he had never met anyone more charming, but that made him only the more anxious to effect what she wished. Several minutes he contrived to make pass



"SAY, HAVE YOU GOT A CART?"

by his lively conversation, and at the end of them, seeing that she could hardly restrain her anxiety, he got up to go and see after the landlord.

"I'll go, too," she said.

"Right."

Just as they had decided to make a move there was a noise of approaching feet outside. Then the door was flung open and three men trooped in. Behind them the scarecrow landlord crept along, carrying another candle.

"Cart ready?" cried Mr. Gilliat.

For answer the landlord grinned, and passed his light to one of the men who were entering. He did not come in himself, but pulled the door to behind them. Mr. Gilliat heard a key turned in the lock, but sat still. The girl had half risen with a little cry of alarm. She had never seen such ruffianly-

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looking men, and she also had heard the scraping of the key.

"What is it?" she whispered.

"Can't say," said Mr. Gilliat; "don't you be frightened."

For a moment she entertained the supposition that the young engineer might be in league with them—these horrible men—but a glance at him reassured her. He was sitting quite still in a lazy position, but with alert eyes. Still, he could do nothing to protect her against three assailants. That they were such was pretty plain. The rearward man had set down the candle and stood with his back to the door. The other two were sidling along towards them.

"Heard if that cart's ready?" Mr. Gilliat's question, put in a disinterested tone, broke the silence. The man at the door gave a jeering laugh.

"Look here, guv'nor," he said, "sink the cart. We don't want no mistake. Me an' my mates is poor men and wants money. Understand me? No vi'lence needed, but wot you got and miss has got, you're going to hand up—strite."

The girl shuddered all over. The man's voice was so coolly menacing. She had the feeling that she was beyond help—in some alien horrible country. All at once she caught sight of the dress of one of them, and whispered to Mr. Gilliat:—

"They're convicts! They've broken out of prison! We read of it in the papers coming down. One's a murderer."

The American nodded. He had suspected something of the kind as soon as he saw them.

"They won't hurt," he whispered to her; and then, raising his voice:—

"Nice place, the Three Snakes; I guess they called it after you."

He had not changed his position except to put his hand in his pocket.

The spokesman of the three muttered a violent oath and took a step forward.

"No kiddin', mate," he said. "We ain't got the time. It's out with it, or——" He slipped something down from his sleeve and produced an iron bar. "There's a warder up there's felt it," he said, savagely; "you 'ave yer choice."

"Wal," said Mr. Gilliat, speaking broad, "I guess it's this——"

He fumbled in his pocket. Next moment there was a loud report, a yell from the man at the door, and the iron bar rattled on the floor. A stream of smoke issued from the American's pocket as he sprang up. Miss Trethewy was on her feet, as pale as ivory, and he took her by the hand and crossed to the other side of the counter before the men had recovered from their astonishment.

"Stoop behind it," he said, and she did so. The man who had been spokesman was hanging on to his right arm, yelling horribly. The other two started to rush the counter. Mr. Gilliat faced them comfortably, with his elbow upon it. He had taken his revolver from his pocket, and eyed it lovingly.

"Like old times," he murmured.

"Drop 'im, boys," said the wounded man, with an oath, seeing the others stop short before the shining barrel.

In the moment of their hesitation Mr. Gilliat spoke:—

"Gentlemen," he said, "this is a six-shooter, as you may see. One of the bullets is fired, as our friend at the door knows. Subtract one from six—leaves five. There's only, so far as I can see, two snakes left, and the landlord. If there were seven of you I shouldn't advise, but out West, when I got first pull on a man, he generally calculated to put up his hands."

He paused, and the man at the door shouted out again:—

"Drop 'im, boys."

What happened next, Miss Trethewy stooping in the shelter of the bar-counter could not quite make out. The men must have made a rush, for two more reports rang out and the smoke filled the room. She heard horrible cries and curses, and the voice of the landlord squeaking at the door, and outside a sound of galloping horses. As the smoke cleared away she saw the young man still lounging against the counter as before, his mouth set a little harder perhaps, the revolver still in his hand.

"Any more coming along?" he asked.

Two of the men were supporting themselves against the wall, and one had fallen flat. They made no answer. Mr. Gilliat raised his voice for the benefit of the landlord outside:—

"Say, mister, is that trap ready yet?"

Quite suddenly the door was burst open, and half-a-dozen men appeared, dragging the landlord between them.

"They're policemen," said Miss Trethewy, overjoyed.

Policemen they were, and very much astonished to find what was going on inside. The inspector in charge explained to Mr. Gilliat that they had only just tracked the three men to the inn, though they had

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"'THEY'RE POLICEMEN,' SAID MISS TRETHEWY."

escaped from the convict prison two days before.

"Lucky we found you in time," he said, as his men secured their prisoners, after a general explanation.

"Very," said the American. "I imagine I'd have had to put that trap to myself if you hadn't struck our track. As it is, the old gentleman that runs the house'll put it up for me."

"We shall want him afterwards."

"You shall have him," said Mr. Gilliat.

But it was after dinner-time before Miss Trethewy got back again to the cottage that her aunt had taken at Berley, so late that Mr. Gilliat had to accept the offer of a room for the night next door. He was very glad to, he said. The place was more historical than he had supposed.

"Perhaps you will stay until you've got through that troublesome business of giving evidence at the prison?" suggested Miss Trethewy's aunt, whose gratitude for her niece's rescue was almost hysterical. "We should be so delighted—and my son, who is coming down."

Mr. Gilliat looked at the girl. She had recovered from her paleness, and had roses enough in her cheeks. He was not at all sure that she did not look prettier than the prettiest American girl he'd seen.

"I'd like to stay—greatly," he said.

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"Would You be an Actress?"

"IF you had your time over again, would you still elect to be an actress, taking into account your knowledge of the hardships, disappointments, and drawbacks incidental to a career on the stage?" That was the question which we sought to get answered by the actresses whose names are familiar to the great body of playgoers.



MISS LILY HANBURY.
From a Photo. by Window & Grove.

MISS MARION TERRY.
From a Photo. by Elliott & Fry.

MISS DOROTHEA BAIRD.
From a Photo. by Elliott & Fry.

"If a woman has talent for the stage," said Miss Lily Hanbury, "it offers her, in my opinion, a greater opportunity than any other calling for the making of an income. On the stage a woman is man's equal so far as her wage-earning capacity goes, and in a few conspicuous instances, which will readily occur to everyone, she may even be his superior. The same can certainly not be said with regard to other artistic professions like writing or painting, for women do not command the same returns as men—at all events, so early in their career. Mark, I say so early in their career, otherwise people will point to one or two conspicuous successes in writing like Lucas Malet, Marie Corelli, and Sarah Grand, and to Rosa Bonheur in painting. Painting and writing still remain, for the most part, man's work, and it is especially apparent when one leaves consideration of the most successful craftsmen and comes to the more ordinary talent.

"This consideration is certainly one of the reasons which induce me to say that were my time to come over again I should certainly go on the stage. Again, some people say that stage life is not compatible with domesticity. I never can see why a woman cannot combine the two. There is little difference, to my mind, whether one spends the evening at the theatre or going from party to party as most society women

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do and getting home at all hours of the night. The strain on their nerves, too, must be as great as the strain on the nervous system of an actress, and I acknowledge that that is great. Still, according to my experience, it is not always equally great. Some plays make a demand on you throughout the run; but in others you get used to it, and the work thus becomes much easier. When I was playing Chorus in 'Henry V.,' for instance, I never felt comfortable at all during the run, a fact to which the peculiar conditions under which I appeared no doubt contributed, for I had to sit or stand alone on a platform raised above the stage.

"To my mind, too, stage life is a very happy life. It is always a gratification to please people, and that gratification is essentially the actor's. True, every light involves a shadow, and against the pleasant things one has to put the unpleasant remarks when one doesn't succeed. Still, it is possible to shut oneself away from some of these unpleasant things, and that, in my opinion, is always desirable. I think that, as the footlights throw a certain glamour over a woman when she is on the stage, she should not minimize that effect by being seen too much off the stage, for that is apt to detract from her power over the public. The whole question is, however, a very delicate one. Many people talk about the temptations of the stage as being a great reason why women, if they had their chance over again, should not choose the life. For my own part I have been connected with the theatre since I was a child of fourteen. I have never had anything but the greatest courtesy either from those connected with the stage or the members of the audience who frequent the theatre. I may, therefore, be allowed to believe that there are no more temptations on the stage than there are off it."



From a Photo. by] MRS. PATRICK CAMPBELL. *[Elliott & Fry.*

"Personally, I should say, if I had to choose a thousand million times over, I should choose the stage," was Miss Dorothea Baird's characteristically enthusiastic reply. "My reason is, however, not based on any question of success which I may have won as an actress, but on the enjoyment I have had out of the work itself. That enjoyment has been very great indeed. I don't think that the hardships of life on the stage ought to deter any woman from a theatrical career if she has an inclination to it, provided she is fairly strong, for health has a great deal to do with withstanding those hardships. I know in my own case when I began the strain knocked me up frightfully, but in time, as I grew stronger, I was quite able to overcome the fatigue. Similarly, I would not say that, because a girl did not evince a great deal of aptitude at once, she was necessarily unsuited to a theatrical career, for some people who have seemed rather dull at first and less apt than their comrades have developed into bigger things than those who began by being very easy on the stage and appeared full of promise. There is one thing, I am certain, which will help everyone who would choose as I would — the kindness which exists in the theatre. I know I have met with more real kindness on the stage than anywhere else, and from actors and actresses more than from any other people. Feeling as I do about the stage, my advice to a would-be actress would not be 'keep away,' but 'go on if you are really keen about it.' Of course, the theatre is enormously overcrowded just now, but I suppose

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that in time it will end, like everything else, in a survival of the fittest. One wants to care a great deal about acting to enjoy the work, for it is work and not amusement. If I had a daughter I should not mind her going on the stage if she had to work, but my daughter could hardly be ready to take up acting for about twenty years, and it is hard to say whether acting will be a lucrative profession at that time. Perhaps, from present appearances, it might not be, and that fact would necessarily colour one's views; but choosing for myself again to-day my answer would undoubtedly be a most emphatic 'Yes.'"

"I cannot understand anyone being anything else than an actress if she is born one." Those were the words of Miss Marion Terry, and she continued: "I think it is a most magnificent profession in every way, if taken seriously. Please note that I say taken seriously, for acting is very hard work and not a pastime. It is full of heart-breaks, worries, and anxieties. There are any number of them to contend with. One has often to give up many things for the sake of the work. There are often times when one would rather do other things and go to other places than the theatre to act, but the hour comes and one has to go. Sometimes one doesn't feel well enough, but still one has to go. Sometimes those we love are ill and we want to stay at home and help nurse them, but we have to put away all such wishes and go and do our work at the theatre. I said just now that acting must be taken seriously. It doesn't do only to study the words of the part; one has to study the *character* of the part one is called upon to impersonate, and all the other characters in the play as well. Study of character is as important as the words. I could talk on this subject for hours, but I should always say the same thing—that I would decide upon being an actress, never mind how many times I was allowed to alter my decision."

Mrs. Patrick Campbell being in America, it was impossible to get her answer direct; but on authority, which we would not venture to quote if it were not absolutely unimpeachable, we can say that her view of the question is as follows. When she was quite a little girl in the nursery she used to play with some cousins, and they used, child-like, to discuss the future and what they would like to be in the coming years. "I would like to be a Queen," one would say; while another, desiring still greater state, would declare, "I want to be an Empress." When the actress-to-be had her turn, her verdict was, "I would rather be an actress than any Empress in the world," and, however much the others might change their views, she always remained constant to her choice. To-day if she were asked she would reply in exactly the same words, only now the word "actress" means "artist" to her.



From a Photo. by] MISS ROSINA BRANDRAM. *[Ellis & Walery.*

"All things considered, I wouldn't go on the stage," were the emphatic words of Miss Rosina Brandram, whose experience is almost unique in London, for, although actors and actresses move from theatre to theatre with, to them, anxious intervals of nothing to do, she has been associated with the Savoy from the time it was opened. "In the first place," she continued, "it is very uphill work getting a position, and in the next, unless you have a great deal of strength, it is a severe strain and constant hard work. At least, I consider it so. That the life is one of false excitement everybody knows. The strain comes when one is rehearsing a new opera and acting at night. In the case of ill-health, when you do not feel up to the mark, you still play rather than disappoint the public. Acting under such circumstances puts a strain on one's frame and brain, for one naturally exerts oneself to the utmost. In taking up a

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From a Photo. by] MISS FORTESCUE. *[Wm. Whiteley, Ltd*

public career one knows one must sacrifice oneself to the public and the manager. But, as I said just now, if I had my time over again I would not do it, for I am very domesticated; I love my home and everything to do with home life, and am perfectly happy with my work, my books, and my pets, and I want nothing else. On the other side of the picture there is the fact that there is no greater pleasure in the world than to be able to go on a platform and amuse and get the thanks of the audience. Then one feels grateful for the gifts God has given to one."

"If I had children, women children, they shouldn't have to work at all," was Miss Fortescue's epigrammatic reply. "If I had men children they should work the greater part of the days of their life, but neither the women nor the men children should work on the stage. If I had to start young people on a career, the boys should be sailors and the girls should go into commercial life. The sailor's life is the ideal training to make a 'man,' for it teaches him to obey without question, and obedience is the first law of Nature. It develops his resourcefulness in the most extraordinary manner. It teaches him self-dependence, and he gets the nonsense knocked out of him by the finest set of gentlemen on God's earth. If at eighteen, when he had had about two years' experience of what it meant really to be a sailor, and was able to appreciate the full possibilities of the life, he said, 'I have a well-founded dislike of the sea,' he would still not be disqualified for any other career in the world, and he would take into it qualities which would be useful for his equipment throughout his life, and he would have laid up a stock of health which would be of inestimable value to him As far as girls go, I object to girls doing work at all; but, if they had to, I should put them, as I said, into commercial life. My reason for this is that I think it is the outlook in which, reasonably speaking, there are the best chances of making a good deal of money. From both sexes I eliminate the few, the very few—I have never found one—the geniuses who decide everything for themselves and want no laws made for them.

"From what I have said about choosing a career for young people you will probably be surprised if, being a woman, I should practise what I preach, and if I had my time over again I should start in commercial life. The whole aspect of the stage has changed completely of late years, and the conditions are quite different from what they were when I first entered the theatrical profession. The stage, indeed, is rapidly becoming 'morganeered' like everything else, only, of course, in a minor way. Personally, I have nothing to grumble at in my career, for if the stage has not given me 'more than I desire,' it has given me 'more than I deserve.' Of course, there are heart-breaks, and disappointments, and anxieties in connection with the professional life of the theatre. What profession is there in which they do not exist? My reason for saying women should not have to work is that I would not have any woman know anything of heart-breaks and disappointments and miseries. I may be singular, but I do not believe that adversity and suffering are good for people. The people in my experience who strive most to bring about the happiness of others are those

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who have been most happy themselves, the most generous are those who have known the least struggling, and those who are the tenderest of other people's reputations are those of blameless lives themselves.

"The great thing in choosing a career is, it seems to me, first to find something which supplies a necessity of the time. I am one of those terrible people who believe that the theatre is not a necessity. It may be a pleasant or an unpleasant luxury according to the way you look at your pleasures, but it is not a necessity. Now, enterprises which supply books, furniture, carpets, hangings, dresses, hats, and other things that I may name, all supply goods which people are not going without, while the people who supply theatrical commodities come in after these—in English-speaking countries. For this reason, if I had the placing of people in the world, I should make them sell the things that are the necessaries of the majority, not the luxuries of the minority. But perhaps I may make one more observation, and that the only one of any matter at all. That is to recall to your mind the proverb about 'bachelors' wives' and 'old maids' children.' If children had fallen to my share they would probably have led me by the nose as others are, and my opinions might then have been of some value, having been gained in the only school of use in such affairs—the school of experience."

"I can't imagine doing anything else if I had my time over again," said Miss Winifred Emery. "You see, I was born for it. I don't mean to insinuate by that with any supernatural talent, but because I come of a theatrical family. My father said when I was born, 'Well, I suppose she will be an actress when she grows up'; and at school it was my great boast, 'I am going on the stage when I grow up.' I really never had a choice of anything else, and, apart altogether from the fact that were I to have my time over again the same conditions would prevail, I say most emphatically I would go on the stage.

"On the other hand, I don't want my daughters to be actresses. The reason, however, is not anything to do with the life, but from utter selfishness on my part. I think I have had enough stage life, and I should like to devote myself to home life and friends. If my daughters went on the stage I should have to go on with my old life in theirs, and that, I confess, I do not want to do. If, however, it became necessary that they should earn their own living, I don't consider they could do anything better than devote themselves to the stage. True, on the stage



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we have disappointments and heart-burnings; almost as many, perhaps, when we get on as at the beginning. Still, everybody has them, and it would be very bad if we didn't, for we should become dreadfully spoilt and overbearing. A great many of the disappointments and heart-burnings on the stage come, in my opinion, from the fact that people start with preconceived opinions of what they want to do instead of what they are best fitted for, and fret and fume because they are given what they are best fitted for instead of what they want. I know that, as a child, when people asked me what I should like to play when I grew up—comedy or tragedy—I always replied 'Tragedy!' And when, afterwards, I found that no one seemed to care for my efforts in that direction, I was terribly disappointed, and a lot of the enthusiasm for my work left me for ever. But I am resigned now to play the parts which people have chosen for me, and so I think I am escaping a good many of the disappointments I should otherwise have attributed to my life as an actress!"

"If I had my time over again," Miss Millard writes, "I would still choose the stage as a profession, for I have a great love for the work—the acting—which goes far to compensate for the hard work, the disappointments, and the strain it imposes on one. If, however, I were asked if I should like to see a child of mine on the stage, I would say I would use all my influence to prevent it; as, though one feels one could endure the nervous strain and tension oneself, I am sure one could not calmly see it wearing on anyone one loved. I also consider that after a certain number of years it tells greatly on the health."



MISS EVA MOORE.
From a Photo. by the London Stereoscopic Co.

"If I had to work for my living as I had to when I went on the stage," were Miss Eva Moore's words, "I should certainly do what I have done. I speak with a certain knowledge, for I tried other things before I tried the stage, and I didn't find them half so interesting. Of course, one has to take into consideration the additional fact that one is apt to like work in which one has been more or less successful. My earlier work was that of a governess. I was not highly educated enough to be governess to grown-up children, and thus able to command a salary worth while having, so I had to content myself with teaching younger children. If I could have been governess to elder girls or taken important classes in a school I should not have tried the stage, for my bringing up did not tend that way. It is useless to deny, however, that if I had kept on governessing I should, even under the best conditions, never have been able to make so much money as on the stage. This admission may be regarded as an im-

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prudent one in so far as it may encourage girls to go on the stage who have no aptitude for the work. If they do, they are doomed to disappointment, for there is far more money to be earned as a competent governess—even for younger children—than there is as an incompetent actress. There is no more trying and wearying calling than that of the woman on the stage who has no special ability, and who has to keep herself out of her earnings. Personally, if I had had an income I should never have dreamt of working, as I think it is a mistake for women to work if they don't have to. Perhaps people will ask why, in view of this admission, I go on working. The reason is simply that, after having worked for many years, work becomes part of one's life, fosters an ambition, and therefore one has to go on. The stage resembles governessing in one respect: it needs no capital to enable one to make a start. If a woman wants to be an artist she has to spend years in preliminary training; if she wishes to be a writer she must be able to support herself while she is producing the work. Her ordinary education, however, is all she needs to be either a governess or an actress. That is the reason why so many women take to the stage; why, in my opinion, we hear so much about the overcrowding of the dramatic profession; and why so many women find so much disappointment in it."

"Oh, yes, certainly," was Miss Irene Vanbrugh's answer to my question. "I should go on the stage if I had to choose again. My reason is that it is a most interesting life and a most interesting art. When I became an actress I was quite prepared to give up everything else for the stage, and I should do it again. I believe it is a great thing for a woman to have some particular interest in life, and I am strongly inclined to say that no one who is not suited to the stage could stay on it for more than two or three years. There are some cases in which dramatic talent does not manifest itself early, or where the opportunities for its manifesting itself are lacking, and one sees women staying on for a long time. If they have the grit to stick for so long in spite of the drawbacks and the setbacks which are inevitable to a theatrical career they are bound to do well in time, as they would be bound to do well in any other calling if they had the same perseverance. That complete self-devotion argues in my mind an innate belief in oneself, and a consciousness of ability which must produce its effect sooner or later. One often hears people say, 'Oh, I will give my life up for the stage,' but when it comes to going to a rehearsal or an afternoon tea-party they elect for the party and let the rehearsal take care of itself. These are the people who, in accordance with my experience,



MISS IRENE VANBRUGH.
From a Photo. by H. Walter Barnett.

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complain of the hard life of the stage, and are constantly bemoaning the fact that they never get a chance. In this connection I will recall a case in point. When I was almost a beginner I was given a tiny part of twenty lines. Three girls who were walking on in the crowd were given my part to understudy. Very soon after the play began I got ill and couldn't act. Of the three girls only one had taken the trouble to study the part. Naturally, she played it all the time I was out of the bill, and that was the starting-point in her career. One of the others actually came to me when I returned and bemoaned the fact that she never got a chance. When the chance was given to her she had not taken it. The fact, as it seems to me, is that the stage is an admirable career for a woman who has the talent and who is willing to work. It is not an admirable career for women who either lack the peculiar talent it requires or who desire a supposedly pleasant place in which to idle during rehearsals and to idle in the evening."

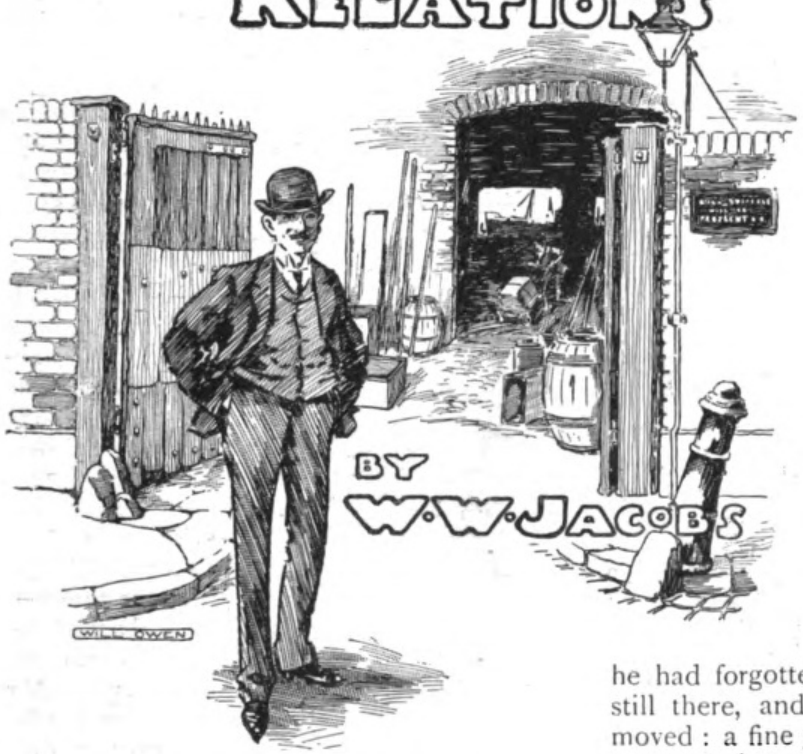


MISS ALMA MURRAY.
From a Photo. by Martin & Sallnow.

Equally emphatic in favour of the stage was Miss Alma Murray, who, after an over-long absence from the stage, has recently returned to take her old position among the leading actresses of the day. "Certainly I would be an actress were my time to come over again, for I love the work. Every woman with an artistic impulse in her must have her field of work, and if that field is in the land of the theatre she will devote herself to it, no matter what may be the drawbacks. Personally, I believe that those drawbacks are greatly overrated. Many people say that the stage is such a bad atmosphere. It is no worse than any other atmosphere. I have been connected with the stage from the time I was quite a child, and I have never seen any results in the theatre which would not have been obtained outside it under the same conditions. Acting being the thing I love, I should take it up again just as, now, I go on with it, for if one is disappointed with the results it is surely quite easy to cease acting by abstaining from going on the stage. Some people say that a stage career is incompatible with home life. I, however, don't believe that any real woman need give up any part of her domesticity by being an actress. It is quite possible to combine a life on the stage with a home life, and I myself, having both, have lost neither. On the contrary, I have gained, for I believe that, properly dealt with, the theatre is as strong an educational influence as the church itself. The play is the thing, and if properly acted the audience sees the influence of one character on another, and so learns human nature on a broad scale rather than on the narrow lines on which most people's lives are necessarily laid."

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ESTABLISHING RELATIONS



BY W. W. JACOBS

MR. RICHARD CATESBY, second officer of the ss. *Wizard*, emerged from the dock-gates in high good-humour to spend an evening ashore. The bustle of the day had departed, and the inhabitants of Wapping, in search of coolness and fresh air, were sitting at open doors and windows indulging in general conversation with anybody within earshot.

Mr. Catesby, turning into Bashford's Lane, lost in a moment all this life and colour. The hum of distant voices certainly reached there, but that was all, for Bashford's Lane, a retiring thoroughfare facing a blank dock wall, capped here and there by towering spars, set an example of gentility which neighbouring streets had long ago decided crossly was impossible for ordinary people to follow. Its neatly-grained shutters, fastened back by the sides of the windows, gave a pleasing idea of uniformity, while its white steps and polished brass knockers were suggestive of almost a Dutch cleanliness.

Mr. Catesby, strolling comfortably along, stopped suddenly for another look at a girl who was standing in the ground-floor window of No. 5. He went on a few paces and then walked back slowly, trying to look as though he had forgotten something. The girl was still there, and met his ardent glances unmoved: a fine girl, with large, dark eyes, and a complexion which was the subject of much scandalous discussion among neighbouring matrons.

"It must be something wrong with the glass, or else it's the bad light," said Mr. Catesby to himself; "no girl is so beautiful as that."

He went by again to make sure. The object of his solicitude was still there and apparently unconscious of his existence. He passed very slowly and sighed deeply.

"You've got it at last, Dick Catesby," he said, solemnly; "fair and square in the most dangerous part of the heart. It's serious this time."

He stood still on the narrow pavement, pondering, and then, in excuse of his flagrant misbehaviour, murmured, "It was meant to be," and went by again. This time he fancied that he detected a somewhat supercilious expression in the dark eyes—a faint raising of well-arched eyebrows.

His engagement to wait at Aldgate Station for the second-engineer and spend an evening

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together was dismissed as too slow to be considered. He stood for some time in uncertainty, and then turning slowly into the Beehive, which stood at the corner, went into the private bar and ordered a glass of beer.

He was the only person in the bar, and the landlord, a stout man in his shirt-sleeves, was the soul of affability. Mr. Catesby, after various general remarks, made a few inquiries about an uncle aged five minutes, whom he thought was living in Bashford's Lane.



"MR. CATESBY MADE A FEW INQUIRIES."

"I don't know 'im," said the landlord.

"I had an idea that he lived at No. 5," said Catesby.

The landlord shook his head. "That's Mrs. Truefitt's house," he said, slowly.

Mr. Catesby pondered. "Truefitt, Truefitt," he repeated; "what sort of a woman is she?"

"Widder-woman," said the landlord; "she lives there with 'er daughter Prudence."

Mr. Catesby said "Indeed!" and being a good listener learned that Mrs. Truefitt was the widow of a master-lighterman, and that her son, Fred Truefitt, after an absence of seven years in New Zealand, was now on his way home. He finished his glass slowly and, the landlord departing to attend to another customer, made his way into the street again.

He walked along slowly, picturing as he went the home-coming of the long absent son. Things were oddly ordered in this world, and Fred Truefitt would probably think nothing of his brotherly privileges. He wondered whether he was like Prudence. He wondered——

"By Jove, I'll do it!" he said, recklessly, as he turned. "Now for a row."

He walked back rapidly to Bashford's Lane, and without giving his courage time to cool plied the knocker of No. 5 briskly.

The door was opened by an elderly woman, thin, and somewhat querulous in expression. Mr. Catesby had just time to notice this, and then he flung his arm round her waist, and hailing her as "Mother!" saluted her warmly.

The faint scream of the astounded Mrs. Truefitt brought her daughter hastily into the passage. Mr. Catesby's idea was ever to do a thing thoroughly, and, relinquishing Mrs. Truefitt, he kissed Prudence with all the ardour which a seven years' absence might be supposed to engender in the heart of a devoted brother. In return he received a box on the ears which made his head ring.

"He's been drinking," gasped the dismayed Mrs. Truefitt.

"Don't you know me, mother?" inquired Mr. Richard Catesby, in grievous astonishment.

"He's mad," said her daughter.

"Am I so altered that *you* don't know me, Prudence?" inquired Mr. Catesby, with pathos. "Don't you know your Fred?"

"Go out," said Mrs. Truefitt, recovering; "go out at once."

Mr. Catesby looked from one to the other in consternation.

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"I know I've altered," he said, at last, "but I'd no idea——"

"If you don't go out at once I'll send for the police," said the elder woman, sharply. "Prudence, scream!"

"I'm not going to scream," said Prudence, eyeing the intruder with great composure. "I'm not afraid of him."

Despite her reluctance to have a scene—a thing which was strongly opposed to the traditions of Bashford's Lane—Mrs. Truefitt had got as far as the doorstep in search of assistance, when a sudden terrible thought occurred to her: Fred was dead, and the visitor had hit upon this extraordinary fashion of breaking the news gently.

"Come into the parlour," she said, faintly.

Mr. Catesby, suppressing his surprise, followed her into the room. Prudence, her fine figure erect and her large eyes meeting his steadily, took up a position by the side of her mother.

"You have brought bad news?" inquired the latter.

"No, mother," said Mr. Catesby, simply, "only myself, that's all."

Mrs. Truefitt made a gesture of impatience, and her daughter, watching him closely, tried to remember something she had once read about detecting insanity by the expression of the eyes. Those of Mr. Catesby were blue, and the only expression in them at the present moment was one of tender and respectful admiration.

"When did you see Fred last?" inquired Mrs. Truefitt, making another effort.

"Mother," said Mr. Catesby, with great pathos, "don't you know me?"

"He has brought bad news of Fred," said Mrs. Truefitt, turning to her daughter; "I am sure he has."

"I don't understand you," said Mr. Catesby, with a bewildered glance from one to the other. "I *am* Fred. Am I much changed? You look the same as you always did, and it seems only yesterday since I kissed Prudence good-bye at the docks. You were crying, Prudence."

Miss Truefitt made no reply; she gazed at him unflinchingly and then bent towards her mother.

"He is mad," she whispered; "we must try and get him out quietly. Don't contradict him."

"Keep close to me," said Mrs. Truefitt, who had a great horror of the insane. "If he turns violent open the window and scream. I thought he had brought bad news of Fred. How did he know about him?"

Her daughter shook her head and gazed curiously at their afflicted visitor. She put his age down at twenty-five, and she could not help thinking it a pity that so good-looking a young man should have lost his wits.

"Bade Prudence good-bye at the docks," continued Mr. Catesby, dreamily. "You drew me behind a pile of luggage, Prudence, and put your head on my shoulder. I have thought of it ever since."

Miss Truefitt did not deny it, but she bit her lips, and shot a sharp glance at him. She began to think that her pity was uncalled-for.

"Tell me all that's happened since I've been away," said Mr. Catesby.

Mrs. Truefitt turned to her daughter and



"I'M JUST GOING AS FAR AS THE CORNER."

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whispered. It might have been merely the effect of a guilty conscience, but the visitor thought that he caught the word "policeman."

"I'm just going as far as the corner," said Mrs. Truefitt, rising, and crossing hastily to the door.

The young man nodded affectionately and sat in doubtful consideration as the front-door closed behind her. "Where is mother going?" he asked, in a voice which betrayed a little pardonable anxiety.

"Not far, I hope," said Prudence

"I really think," said Mr. Catesby, rising—"I really think that I had better go after her. At her age——"

He walked into the small passage and put his hand on the latch. Prudence, now quite certain of his sanity, felt sorely reluctant to let such impudence go unpunished.

"Are you going?" she inquired.

"I think I'd better," said Mr. Catesby, gravely. "Dear mother——"

"You're afraid," said the girl, calmly.

Mr. Catesby coloured and his buoyancy failed him. He felt a little bit cheap.

"You are brave enough with two women," continued the girl, disdainfully; "but you had better go if you're afraid."

Mr. Catesby regarded the temptress uneasily. "Would you like me to stay?" he asked.

"I?" said Miss Truefitt, tossing her head. "No, I don't want you. Besides, you're frightened."

Mr. Catesby turned, and with a firm step made his way back to the room; Prudence, with a half-smile, took a chair near the door and regarded her prisoner with unholy triumph.

"I shouldn't like to be in your shoes," she said, agreeably; "mother has gone for a policeman."

"Bless her," said Mr. Catesby, fervently. "What had we better say to him when he comes?"

"You'll be locked up," said Prudence; "and it will serve you right for your bad behaviour."

Mr. Catesby sighed. "It's the heart," he said, gravely. "I am not to blame, really. I saw you standing in the window, and I could see at once that you were beautiful, and good, and kind."

"I never heard of such impudence," continued Miss Truefitt.

"I surprised myself," admitted Mr. Catesby. "In the usual way I am very quiet and well-behaved, not to say shy."

Miss Truefitt looked at him scornfully. "I think that you had better stop your nonsense and go," she remarked.

"Don't you want me to be punished?" inquired the other, in a soft voice.

"I think that you had better go while you can," said the girl, and at that moment there was a heavy knock at the front-door. Mr. Catesby, despite his assurance, changed colour; the girl eyed him in perplexity. Then she opened the small folding-doors at the back of the room.

"You're only—stupid," she whispered. "Quick! Go in there. I'll say you've gone. Keep quiet, and I'll let you out by-and-by."

She pushed him in and closed the doors. From his hiding-place he heard an animated conversation at the street-door and minute particulars as to the time which had elapsed since his departure and the direction he had taken.

"I never heard such impudence," said Mrs. Truefitt, going into the front-room and sinking into a chair after the constable had taken his departure. "I don't believe he was mad."

"Only a little weak in the head, I think," said Prudence, in a clear voice. "He was very frightened after you had gone; I don't think he will trouble us again."

"He'd better not," said Mrs. Truefitt, sharply. "I never heard of such a thing—never."

She continued to grumble, while Prudence, in a low voice, endeavoured to soothe her. Her efforts were evidently successful, as the prisoner was, after a time, surprised to hear the older woman laugh—at first gently, and then with so much enjoyment that her daughter was at some pains to restrain her. He sat in patience until evening deepened into night, and a line of light beneath the folding-doors announced the lighting of the lamp in the front-room. By a pleasant clatter of crockery he became aware that they were at supper, and he pricked up his ears as Prudence made another reference to him.

"If he comes to-morrow night while you are out I sha'n't open the door," she said. "You'll be back by nine, I suppose."

Mrs. Truefitt assented.

"And you won't be leaving before seven," continued Prudence. "I shall be all right."

Mr. Catesby's face glowed and his eyes grew tender; Prudence was as clever as she was beautiful. The delicacy with which she had intimated the fact of the unconscious Mrs. Truefitt's absence on the following evening was beyond all praise. The only

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depressing thought was that such resourcefulness savoured of practice.

He sat in the darkness for so long that even the proximity of Prudence was not sufficient amends for the monotony of it, and it was not until past ten o'clock that the folding-doors were opened and he stood blinking at the girl in the glare of the lamp.

"Quick!" she whispered.

Mr. Catesby stepped into the lighted room.

"The front-door is open," whispered Prudence. "Make haste. I'll close it."

She followed him to the door; he made an ineffectual attempt to seize her hand, and the next moment was pushed gently outside and the door closed behind him. He stood a moment gazing at the house, and then hastened back to his ship.

"Seven to-morrow," he murmured; "seven to-morrow. After all, there's nothing pays in this world like cheek—nothing."

He slept soundly that night, though the things that the second-engineer said to him about wasting a hard-working man's evening would have lain heavy on the conscience of a more scrupulous man. The only thing that troubled him was the manifest intention of his friend not to let him slip through his fingers on the following evening. At last, in sheer despair at his inability to shake him off, he had to tell him that he had an appointment with a lady.

"Well, I'll come, too," said the other, glowering at him. "It's very like she'll have a friend with her; they generally do."

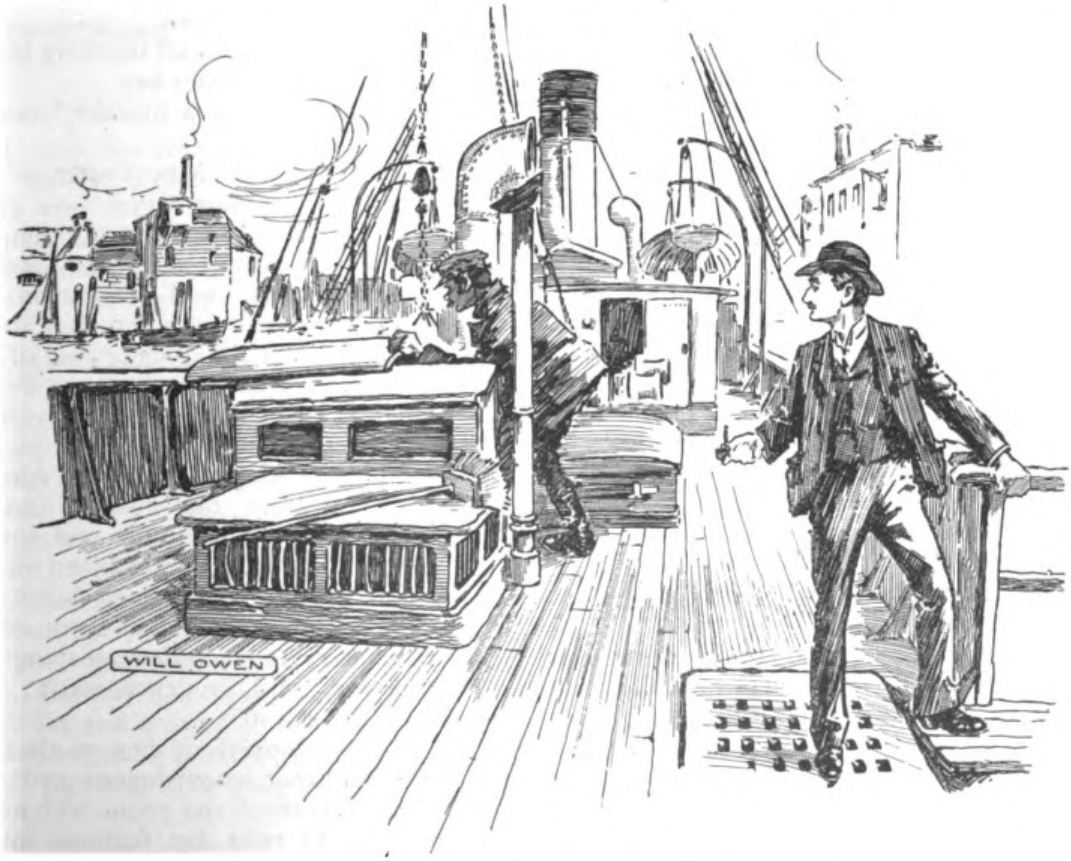
"I'll run round and tell her," said Catesby. "I'd have arranged it before, only I thought you didn't care about that sort of thing."

"Female society is softening," said the second-engineer. "I'll go and put on a clean collar."

Catesby watched him into his cabin and then, though it still wanted an hour to seven, hastily quitted the ship and secreted himself in the private bar of the Beehive.

He waited there until a quarter past seven, and then, adjusting his tie for about the tenth time that evening in the glass behind the bar, sallied out in the direction of No. 5.

He knocked lightly, and waited. There was no response, and he knocked again. When the fourth knock brought no response, his heart sank within him and he indulged in vain speculations as to the reasons for this unexpected hitch in the programme. He knocked again, and then the door opened suddenly and Prudence, with a little cry of



"I'LL GO AND PUT ON A CLEAN COLLAR."

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surprise and dismay, backed into the passage.

"You!" she said, regarding him with large eyes.

Mr. Catesby bowed tenderly, and passing in closed the door behind him.

"I wanted to thank you for your kindness last night," he said, humbly.

"Very well," said Prudence; "good-bye."

Mr. Catesby smiled. "It'll take me a long time to thank you as I ought to thank you," he murmured. "And then I want to apologize; that'll take time, too."

"You had better go," said Prudence, severely; "kindness is thrown away upon you. I ought to have let you be punished."

"You are too good and kind," said the other, drifting by easy stages into the parlour.

Miss Truefitt made no reply, but following him into the room seated herself in an easy-chair and sat coldly watchful.

"How do you know what I am?" she inquired.

"Your face tells me," said the infatuated Richard. "I hope you will forgive me for my rudeness last night. It was all done on the spur of the moment."

"I am glad you are sorry," said the girl, softening.

"All the same, if I hadn't done it," pursued Mr. Catesby, "I shouldn't be sitting here talking to you now."

Miss Truefitt raised her eyes to his, and then lowered them modestly to the ground. "That is true," she said, quietly.

"And I would sooner be sitting here than anywhere," pursued Catesby. "That is," he added, rising, and taking a chair by her side, "except here."

Miss Truefitt appeared to tremble, and made as though to rise. Then she sat still and took a gentle peep at Mr. Catesby from the corner of her eye.

"I hope that you are not sorry I am here?" said that gentleman.

Miss Truefitt hesitated. "No," she said, at last.

"Are you — are you glad?" asked the modest Richard.

Miss Truefitt averted her eyes altogether. "Yes," she said, faintly.

A strange feeling of solemnity came over the triumphant Richard. He took the hand nearest to him and pressed it gently.

"I—I can hardly believe in my good luck," he murmured.

"Good luck?" said Prudence, innocently.

"Isn't it good luck to hear you say that you are glad I'm here?" said Catesby.

"You're the best judge of that," said the girl, withdrawing her hand. "It doesn't seem to me much to be pleased about."

Mr. Catesby eyed her in perplexity, and was about to address another tender remark to her when she was overcome by a slight fit of coughing. At the same moment he started at the sound of a shuffling footstep in the passage. Somebody tapped at the door.

"Yes?" said Prudence.

"Can't find the knife-powder, miss," said a harsh voice. The door was pushed open and disclosed a tall, bony woman of about forty. Her red arms were bare to the elbow, and she betrayed several evidences of a long and arduous day's charing.

"It's in the cupboard," said Prudence. "Why, what's the matter, Mrs. Porter?"

Mrs. Porter made no reply. Her mouth was wide open and she was gazing with starting eyeballs at Mr. Catesby.

"*Joe!*" she said, in a hoarse whisper. "*Joe!*"

Mr. Catesby gazed at her in chilling silence. Miss Truefitt, with an air of great surprise, glanced from one to the other.

"*Joe!*" said Mrs. Porter again. "Ain't you goin' to speak to me?"

Mr. Catesby continued to gaze at her in speechless astonishment. She skipped clumsily round the table and stood before him with her hands clasped.

"Where 'ave you been all this long time?" she demanded, in a higher key.

"You—you've made a mistake," said the bewildered Richard.

"Mistake?" wailed Mrs. Porter. "Mistake! Oh, where's your 'art?"

Before he could get out of her way she flung her arms round the horrified young man's neck and embraced him copiously. Over her bony left shoulder the frantic Richard met the ecstatic gaze of Miss Truefitt, and, in a flash, he realized the trap into which he had fallen.

"*Mrs. Porter!*" said Prudence.

"It's my 'usband, miss," said the Amazon, reluctantly releasing the flushed and dishevelled Richard; "'e left me and my five eighteen months ago. For eighteen months I 'aven't 'ad a sight of 'is blessed face."

She lifted the hem of her apron to her face and broke into discordant weeping.

"Don't cry," said Prudence, softly; "I'm sure he isn't worth it."

Mr. Catesby looked at her wanly. He was beyond further astonishment, and when Mrs. Truefitt entered the room with a laudable attempt to twist her features into an expression of surprise, he scarcely noticed her.

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"It's my Joe," said Mrs. Porter, simply.

"Good gracious!" said Mrs. Truefitt. "Well, you've got him now; take care he doesn't run away from you again."

"I'll look after that, ma'am," said Mrs. Porter, with a glare at the startled Richard.

"She's very forgiving," said Prudence. "She kissed him just now."

"Did she, though," said the admiring Mrs. Truefitt. "I wish I'd been here."



"I'LL LOOK AFTER THAT, MA'AM."

"I can do it agin, ma'am," said the obliging Mrs. Porter.

"If you come near me again——" said the breathless Richard, stepping back a pace.

"I shouldn't force his love," said Mrs. Truefitt; "it'll come back in time, I dare say."

"I'm sure he's affectionate," said Prudence.

Mr. Catesby eyed his tormentors in silence; the faces of Prudence and her mother betokened much innocent enjoyment, but the austerity of Mrs. Porter's visage was unrelaxed.

"Better let bygones be bygones," said Mrs. Truefitt; "he'll be sorry by-and-by for all the trouble he has caused."

"He'll be ashamed of himself—if you give him time," added Prudence.

Mr. Catesby had heard enough; he took up his hat and crossed to the door.

"Take care he doesn't run away from you again," repeated Mrs. Truefitt.

"I'll see to that, ma'am," said Mrs. Porter, taking him by the arm. "Come along, Joe."

Mr. Catesby attempted to shake her off, but in vain, and he ground his teeth as he realized the absurdity of his position. A man he could have dealt with, but Mrs. Porter was invulnerable. Sooner than walk down the road with her he preferred the sallies of the parlour. He walked back to his old position by the fireplace, and stood gazing moodily at the floor.

Mrs. Truefitt tired of the sport at last. She wanted her supper, and with a significant glance at her daughter she beckoned the redoubtable and reluctant Mrs. Porter from the room. Catesby heard the kitchen-door close behind them, but he made no move. Prudence stood gazing at him in silence.

"If you want to go," she said, at last, "now is your chance."

Catesby followed her into the passage without a word, and waited quietly while she opened the door. Still silent, he put on his hat and passed out into the darkening street. He turned after a short distance for a last look at the house and, with a sudden sense of elation, saw that she was standing on the step. He hesitated, and then walked slowly back.

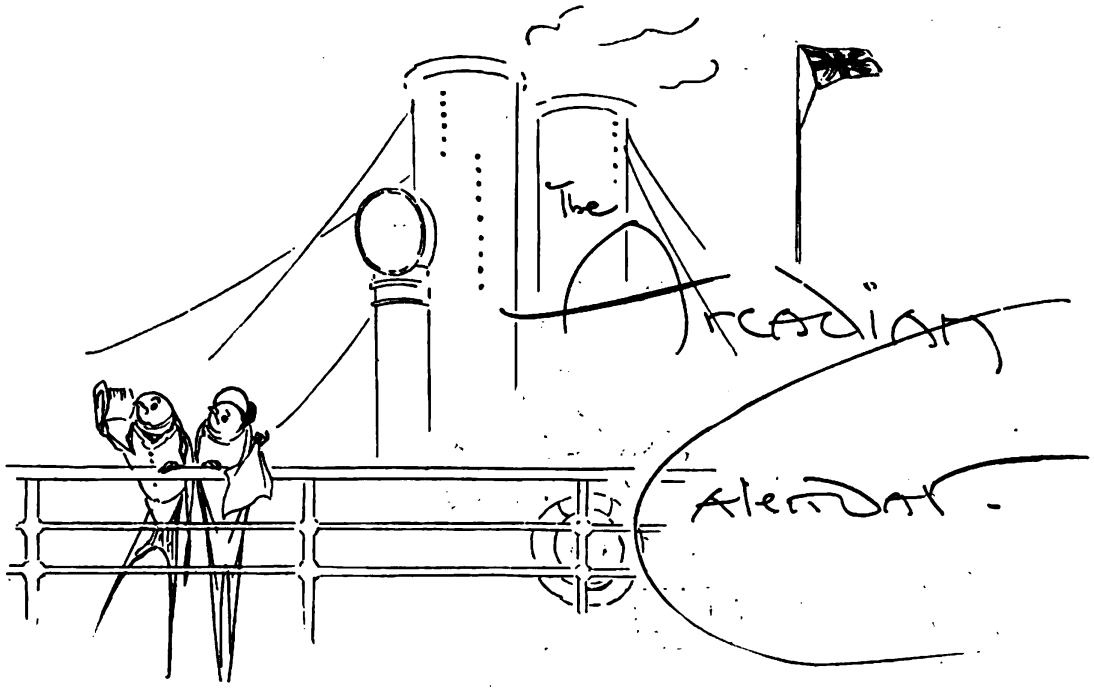
"Yes?" said Prudence.

"I should like to tell your mother that I am sorry," he said, in a low voice.

"It is getting late," said the girl, softly; "but, if you really wish to tell her—Mrs. Porter will not be here to-morrow night."

She stepped back into the house and the door closed behind her.

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By E. D. Cuming and
J. A. Shepherd.

September

"FIRST SEPTEMBER: Partridge Shooting begins." The methods of the partridge have changed since the reaping machine and sowing drill came into fashion; in the old days of long and ragged stubble and irregularly growing turnips he could not run, so waited till he felt bound to rise on the wing. Nowadays he sees the shooting party approach and puts his best foot foremost down the straight furrows between the turnips or across the closely shaven stubble. There be those who say our bird has learned the trick of running from the French partridge, the oft-anathematized red-leg, which is possible:—

'Ah, non! fellow-sportsbird, *mon frère de la chasse*,
If you shall permeet, I shall say of few things
That shall prove you how partritch is—how you say?—*ass*
What fly from the *chasseur* away on the wings.

It is so much bettaire to *ron* through the crop,
Ron *most queek* on yours legs! Now I go to tell why:
The Français say always "I shoot ven he stop,"
And the Anglais say always "I shoot ven he fly."

It must be allowed that there is weight in



"RON MOST QUEEK ON YOURS LEGS!"

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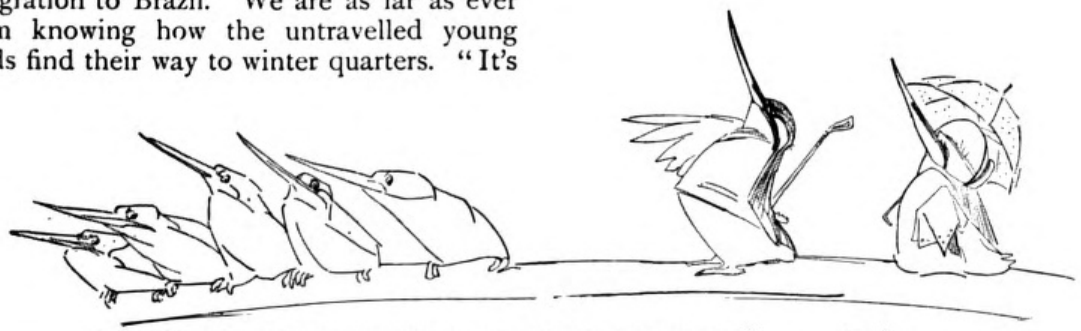


"WARNED OFF."

the argument: anyhow, the French bird often does our partridge a good turn; he rushes by and so gives him timely warning to be off.

On the moors by this time grouse-driving has begun, to the indignation of the old cocks. Those discreet patriarchs, hearing men advance, take it for granted safety lies in prompt flight, and discover when too late that this time the approaching humans were harmless, and death comes from the turf butts over which they are being driven. The slaughter of old cocks is very necessary, because the jealous senior will not allow a young cock to take up his quarters within five hundred yards of him if he can help it; *he* knows what those young fellows are, and won't have them hanging about the premises. Hence, unless the tough old cocks are killed off, the desirable youngsters bred on your moor betake themselves to your neighbour's.

The young cuckoos become conscious of a strange craving to be up and flying south: the hedge-sparrow foster-parents cannot help them; as well might the village labourer's son seek advice from his father concerning emigration to Brazil. We are as far as ever from knowing how the untravelled young birds find their way to winter quarters. "It's instinct," we say, contentedly. Useful word "instinct." The fly-catchers mark the decrease in insect supplies and go: the nightjar and wryneck go, too. Where? Well, take the fly-catcher. "In winter," says Mr. Howard Saunders, one of our soundest authorities, "it visits India, Arabia, and Africa to Cape Colony." Merely pausing to point out that the eminent authority does not mean that each individual takes a Cook's circular tour ticket, we may say it is probable that the birds, broadly speaking, go to the most accessible warm climate. There is no reason why fly-catchers, which summer in England, should winter in India; travelling expenses are nothing to them, of course; but, on the other hand, taking no interest in Indian scenery, history, or social questions, they may just as well go to Africa, which is the nearest country with a respectable winter climate. It is about this time that the kingfishers harden their hearts and banish their children. The kingfisher thinks that prince-fishers—if we may call them so—cannot learn habits of self-reliance too



THE KINGFISHERS HARDEN THEIR HEARTS AND BANISH THEIR CHILDREN."

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"'I THOUGHT I'D CALL,' BEGAN THE CRAB."

early in life, also he will brook no rivals near his throne, so the family is scattered up stream and down with paternal blessings, which sound remarkably like imprecations, each member receiving assurances of his or her parents' undying affection, and promises of condign punishment if they dare come back. The children seem to have more faith in the latter; at all events, they stay away.

The oyster season is begun again. The oyster gets three months' holiday by law and a fourth by custom. They ought to have more; prolific to prodigality, oysters are reckless parents, dismissing their spawn or "spat" to the mercy of every fish that passes. The authorities are not agreed concerning the dimensions of the oyster's original family, but apparently a million, more or less, are of no great account. Few of the spat ever begin life in earnest, much less find their childish shells safely ensconced on the peaceful, but treacherous, dredger-threatened oyster-bed. When oysters come in crabs go out.

"I thought I'd call," began the crab. "We heard you were in bed,
And not expecting long to live; and as we're free from dread
Of crab-pots now, I came to see—before the dredger ends—"
Sobs ch·ked the crab, she stammered, of "the sympathy of friends."

"Friends!" shrieked the oyster, starting up. "There's not in all the sea
A fish that swims, or sinks, or crawls, that is a friend to me.
Fish never spared a child of mine, I know of only five
Who grew to adult oysterhood—and men ate those alive.

Give us ten years of fishless peace secure from all our foes,
And what d'you think would happen then?" The crab said, "Goodness knows."
"I'll tell you," said the oyster, and she took her little slate,
And sucked a stumpy pencil as she tried to calculate.



"THE MACKEREL PUT OUT TO SEA."

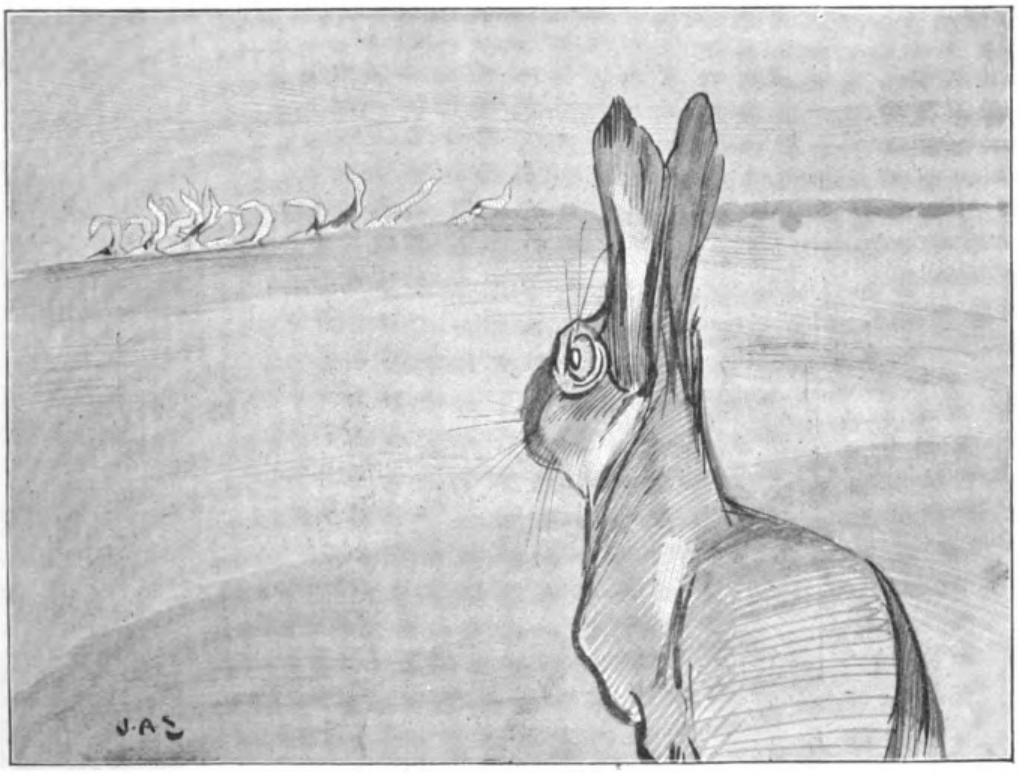
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"In ten years' time—if all grew up—I find that there would be
Oysters enough to fill the earth, the rivers, lakes, and sea.
The shells would lie from Pole to Pole, a depth of fathoms three.
Oh, would it not be glorious that oyster world to see?"
"Well, no," the thoughtful crab replied, "there'd be no room for me."

The oyster did not overstate the case: the price of oysters may be a subject of regret, but statisticians are agreed that their unchecked multiplication is not to be desired unless they are to monopolize this planet.

The mackerel, who have spent the summer on the coast, put out to sea; they appear to be punctual in their movements as far as observations in Plymouth Sound reveal. Pontopriddan has a terrible story to illustrate the turpitude of the mackerel: a shoal, he says, once surrounded a Norwegian sailor who was bathing; by sheer weight of numbers they pushed him into deep water, and while they pushed bit him so severely that, though rescued, the poor man died from loss of blood. Without reflecting on the veracity of Pontopriddan or his informant, one feels it would be satisfactory to hear the mackerel's account of the affair. The mackerel goes bad very quickly; for which reason an Act of Parliament was passed in 1698 to permit him to be cried in the London streets on Sundays.

The spinster glow-worm turns out her lamp, for the gentlemen are all married and dead, and economy forbids the waste of brightness on the empty air. The great bat or noctule, who, owing to his affection for the higher regions of the air, is thought rarer than is actually the case, comes down, folds himself up, and goes to bed till next April: seven or eight months' calm, refreshing sleep fortify him for the fatigues of five or four months' activity. The slim, secretive eel chooses a dark night and glides away down stream with as much caution as though eloping with a



"COURSING BEGINS."

ward in Chancery. The authorities are divided concerning the subsequent proceedings of eels: whether Mrs. Eel lays five million or ten million eggs; whether she lays them in the depths of the sea; in the depths of estuarial mud; dies after laying the eggs; doesn't die afterwards—all these are subjects of debate. If an experienced family eel could be coaxed into the witness-box, several great minds would be set at rest: but the eel preserves an attitude of masterly reserve.

The 15th of September brings repose to the otter, who has been hunted since the middle of April, and brings trouble to the hare. Coursing begins on this day, and

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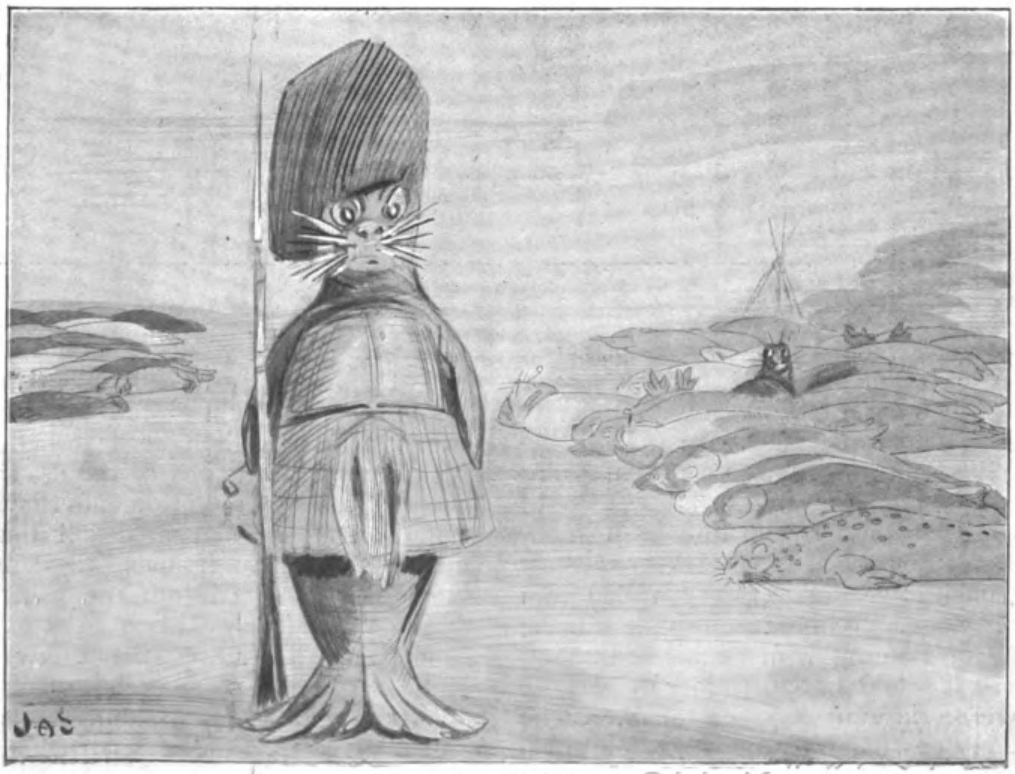
some few packs of harriers begin hunting within the next fortnight; most packs, however, postpone their opening day till about mid-October, if not till the 1st of November.

The rabbits are freed from nursery duties some time in September; young ones have been found in November, but that was exceptionally late, and probably very mild weather tempted a particularly motherly rabbit to tempt fate with an untimely litter. The harvest-mouse sometimes produces a family as late as this, but others of the genus (saving always the house-mouse) have done with domestic affairs for the year.



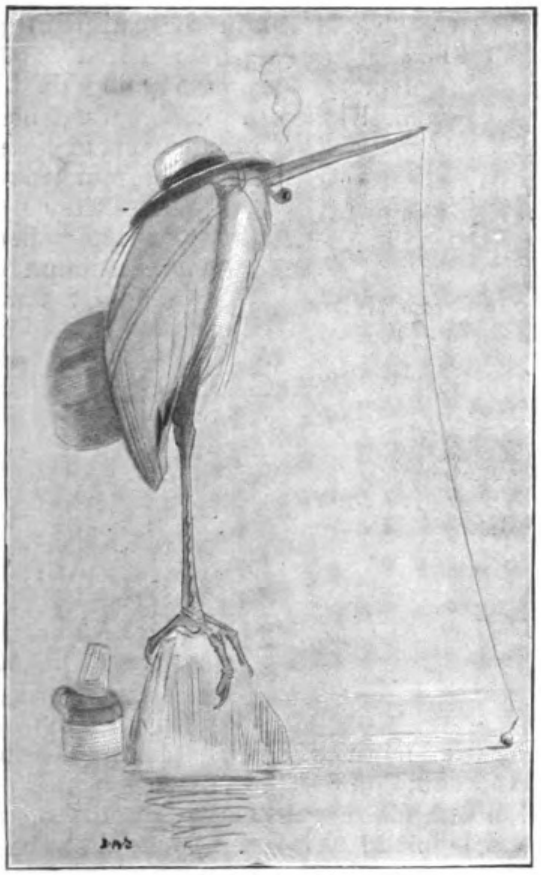
"THE OTTER'S REPOSE."

The seals marry in September. In hot weather they spend much time in drowsy meditation on the rocks, and would spend more in this harmless occupation if men would leave them alone. Fishermen say they appoint a sentry to keep a look-out before they settle down thus: there is nothing improbable in this, but the authorities accept the statement with reserve, having remarked that the members of a sleeping party look up from time to time. It may be that these wakeful seals are merely keeping an eye on the sentry: but this conjecture has not been received with approval by those who give natural history details the guinea-stamp that secures currency. Towards the end of the month the stag turns angrily to thoughts of love, and rambles over the hills all night bellowing; some natures cannot love greatly without hating greatly, and of



"ON GUARD."

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"A SUGGESTION."

such is the disposition of the stag. He is spoiling for a fight, and thanks to his loud advertisement usually finds a friend to oblige, when the two engage in earnest. They fight to the death if need be, while the hinds stand by to see the end and fall into the train of the victor. The stalking season ends during the first week in October, and for a month the deer are left undisturbed to fight and marry. The carrion crows are at this season prone to leave the moors, where perhaps more shooting is in progress than they care to encourage by their presence, and resort to the shores. Crows are fond of shell-fish, mussels particularly; and when the bird finds a mussel he can't open by ordinary means, he weighs the situation intelligently, soars aloft with the obstinate thing in his bill, and picking out a good hard rock drops it thereon, to descend smiling and eat it. Family parties of herons haunt the water-side: their manners are reposeful, but they mean business, for the birds of the year are learning the elements of the anglers' gentle craft:—

Now bear in mind the rules you learned when you were taught your drill,
That dinner, unlike victories, is won by standing still.
Open your eyes and shut your beak, pretend that you are stuffed—
And don't forget refraction's law; that way are catches muffed.

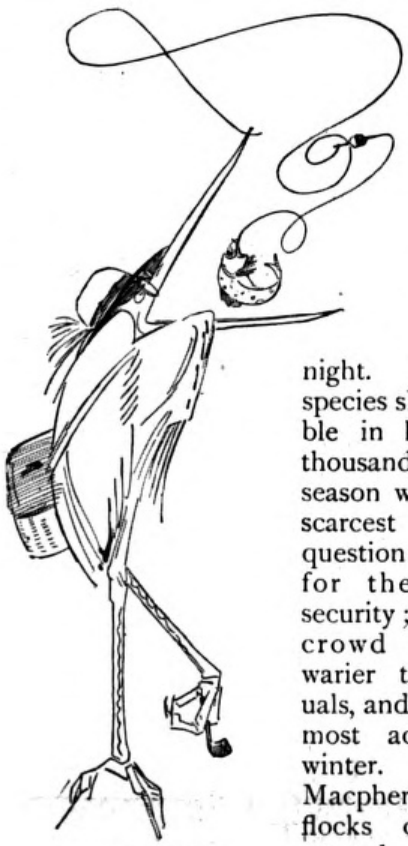
Your head between your shoulders sink; the attitude is lent a
Look of disarming dreaminess if on the gastric centre
You rest your beak in readiness to make your downward stroke.
When fishes come strike clean and hard; it's slovenly to poke.

And when you've got your fish be sure you gulp him down at once,
Don't trifle with him lest he drop and make you look a dunce;

I'd not accept to drop my prey, so foolish I should feel,
An 18-carat gold-fish or a sterling silver eel.

It must be said that the heron does not confine himself to fish dinners: he eats frogs, water-voles, and other dainties, not always choosing with discretion. Herons have been found dead, choked by water-voles which were several sizes too large for their throats.

The starlings, always sociable, collect in flocks for the winter: these flocks resort regularly every night to the same place to roost; there is one such starling roost in a plantation on Cramond Island, in the Firth of Forth, about a mile from the mouth of the River Almond. Not a bird builds there in spring, and not one is to be seen there in the daytime, but in the autumn and winter evenings they come in thousands to pass the night. Why some species should assemble in hundreds or thousands for the season when food is scarcest is an open question: it may be for their greater security; birds in a crowd are always warier than individuals, and bird foes are most active in the winter. Mr. H. A. Macpherson says that flocks of starlings spend the whole



"EXPLANATION."

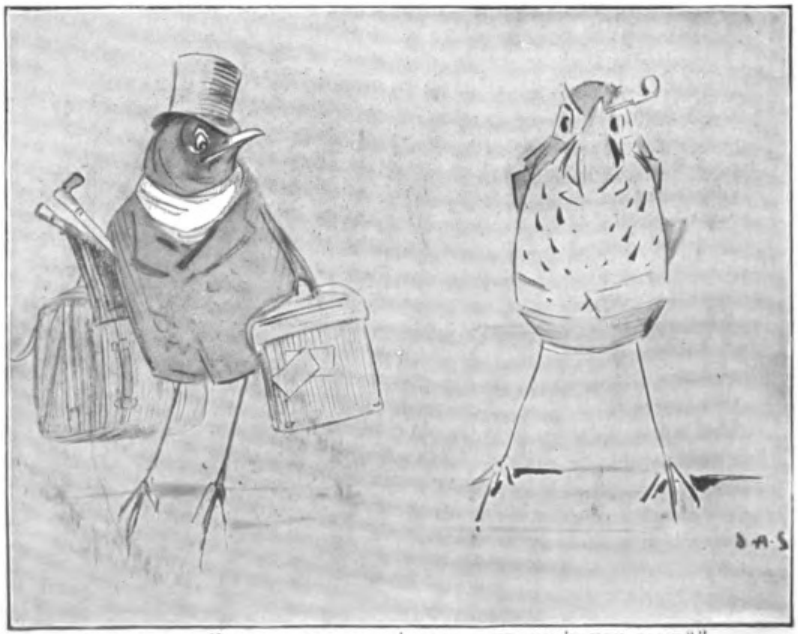
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"BACHELOR STARLINGS."

summer on the Cumberland salt-marshes; he believes these to be bachelors who come there to enjoy themselves in idle frivolity instead of marrying and bringing up families like respectable starlings. These bachelor flocks break up in October, no doubt to join other flocks. The wild duck begins to put on again the smart winter clothes he gave up wearing in spring, when he had seen his wife settled for the season. Blackgame "pack" about the end of the month. Mr. J. G. Millais says the old cocks and greyhens, or old cocks alone, make up parties by themselves, leaving the birds of the year to form assemblies with friends of their own age, and a very sensible plan too. The old greyhens do not always "pack": they sometimes winter singly or in small parties. At this season blackgame find attractions on arable land during the day, resorting to the higher moors to sleep. The blackcocks have another tournament of a somewhat perfunctory kind in the autumn. There is no object in these exercises so far as man knows, but perhaps the birds merely want to keep their hands in, with a view to the real *lek* in the early spring. The grouse separate about mid-September, the cocks going off by themselves or in small parties, and the hens in coteries of from five to seven.

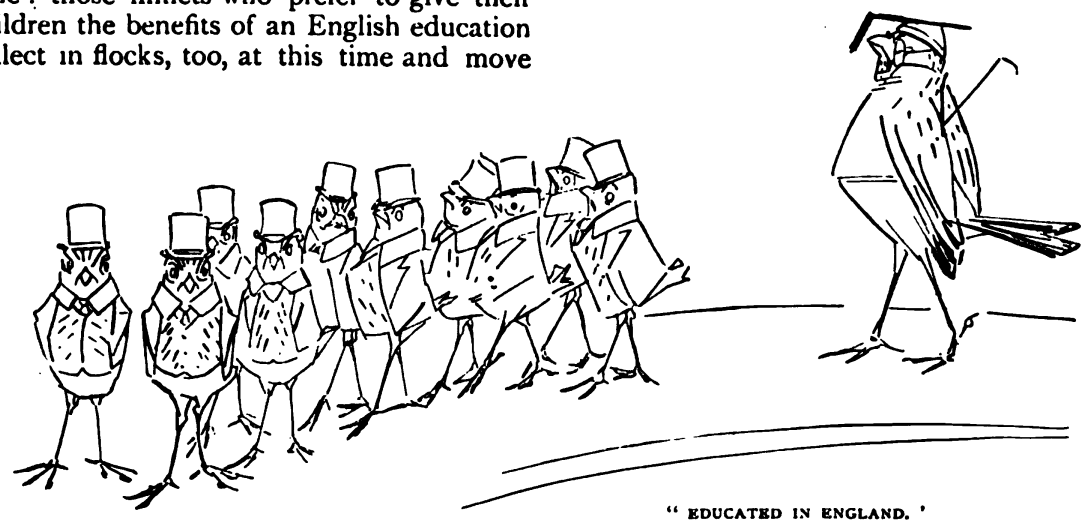
The emigration movements go on throughout September: the corncrake — pardon, landrail — notwithstanding his corpulence, gets under way about the end of the month. The Kalmucks told J. F. Gmelin, the naturalist, that the southward-bound cranes carried each a corncrake on his back: just the sort of thing a fat corncrake would enjoy if the crane consented to fall in with his views. There is nothing improbable in the story: a short-eared owl was once seen to land on the Yorkshire coast carrying on its back a golden-crested wren, whom it had, no doubt, overtaken at sea wing-weary and exhausted, and had given a lift. The North American Indians tell similar stories of such assistance lent by big birds to little ones. The ring-ousel goes—the one representative of our thrushes who does not consider this



RING-OUSEL: "WELL, GOOD-BYE, I'M OFF—BUT WON'T YOU COME?"
THRUSH: "NO, THANKS; OLD ENGLAND IS GOOD ENOUGH FOR ME."

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country good enough for him in the winter, though there is reason to believe that some of our song-thrushes also go abroad. The redstart and willow-wren say good-bye, and the garden-warbler leaves about the end of the month: the garden-warbler goes as far as Cape Colony, but whether the birds found there come from England or some other part of Europe is not known. Birds' ideas of what constitutes an enjoyable climate differ: linnets who bring up their families in Scandinavia are satisfied to winter in the milder climate of England, and begin to come over to us in vast flocks about this time: those linnets who prefer to give their children the benefits of an English education collect in flocks, too, at this time and move



"EDUCATED IN ENGLAND."

southward—some go abroad, others do not. The golden-crested wrens, smallest of European birds, have a high opinion of this country as a winter resort: they come over from Norway and Sweden and elsewhere in countless thousands: continuous flocks extending right across England, St. George's Channel, into Ireland, have been recorded: the marvel is how such tiny birds can remain on the wing long enough to perform such a journey: it is more than three hundred miles between the nearest points of the Norwegian and Scottish coasts, but many of these adventurous travellers disdain the risks of over-sea journeying, and swarms come straight to the Yorkshire and Lincolnshire sea-board, four hundred miles at least. Judging from the numbers of birds of many species which perch to rest on the rigging of vessels in the North Sea, they often find the trip more exhausting than they expected: and as ships and obliging big birds are not always where they are wanted, the loss of life must be considerable. The golden plover breeds with us, but is far commoner in more northerly latitudes; the young golden plovers arrive in large flocks now, in advance of their parents, who remain to finish moulting, and haunt the sea-shores; many, of course, go inland, but the bill of fare on the beach at low tide has great attractions. The ruff, formerly a fairly common bird in marshy districts, but now practically exterminated in England as a breeding species by drainage and collectors, comes to us after moulting. The cock does well to leave behind him the wonderful ruff whence he derives his name: his extravagant style of dress in the breeding season marked him out for slaughter. Inconspicuously attired like his wife he is tolerably safe.

The dragon-flies render their last duty to their species and lay their eggs preparatory to dying. Some of the earlier kinds are dead already, but the large majority complete their allotted span of three months in September, and egg-laying is therefore general. Some dragon-flies are equipped with that neat instrument called an ovipositor, with which the owner can make holes in the leaf or stem of a water-plant to receive eggs: those who have not got an ovipositor drop their eggs casually into the water and trust to luck to look after them. The degree of confidence wild creatures repose in luck demands the attention of the Anti-Gambling League. The Death's Head moth, whom we saw last month in caterpillar guise retreating into the earth to become a chrysalis, emerges in its might. The moth's wings attain their full size—five inches across in some specimens—in a couple of hours; it must be a dizzying sensation to grow at such a rate as that. The Death's

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Head is gifted above other moths: it has a voice—a weird and ghastly little squeak—which has been compared to that of a sick mouse. The insect presumes upon its size and accomplishments as a speaker to attack bee-hives and steal honey, which it does with impunity, as the bees are afraid of it. We can hardly tax the bees with cowardice, for many among country people are afraid of the Death's Head, too; the device on his thorax, the name he derives therefrom, and that unearthly voice, the more unearthly as coming from a moth, combine to render the Death's Head an object of superstition and dislike. The honey harvest is gathered in September. The principles of the bee deteriorate sadly at this season. Mr. Pettigrew says reproachfully that bees are thievish all the summer; but in September robbers are constantly prowling about, and hive burglary and theft of honey are deplorably common.

The invasion of this country by winter visitors is only beginning in September: on the other hand, the vast majority of the birds who do not mean to stay with us leave during the latter half of the month, more particularly if the weather is become cold and disagreeable. The sand-martins are gone, and though some of the house-martins are busy rearing a third brood they probably wish they had been content with two, and were free to join the daily increasing throngs of their fellows who, with the swallows, are collecting on telegraph wires and roofs preparatory to starting. Swallows and martins make a greater business about leaving for the winter than any other species; they linger twittering for days as though sorry to go, as perhaps they are:—

Good-bye! Our pleasant stay is only ended
Because the nights grow cold and flies grow few.
We'll take your summer south and get it mended,
And bring it back next spring as good as new.

Last week that snap of frost showed something broken:
You don't approve of summer stopping thus.
Accept of our regard for you a token,
And leave the slight repairs required to us.

Why, when in spring the birds go north in legions,
Not beg them take your winter, wretched thing,
And regulate it in the Arctic regions?
It now gets mixed with autumn and with spring.

Young foxes have by this time discovered that life is not all chicken and rabbit; hounds are cub-hunting and teaching those whom it most nearly concerns that safety lies in flight; the timorous cub who declines to learn this lesson and dodges about in covert teaches hounds in his own person that fox-flesh is a thing of great desire. The ardent sportsman who said that if he saw a May fox killed and could begin cubbing in July he could worry through the rest of the year somehow did not ask much more than he can get in some countries. Given an early harvest there are packs which turn their attention to the cubs in August, but cub-hunting is not general until September. The squirrels are enjoying feasts of beech-mast and other nuts; and the dormouse, hedgehog, and other hibernating creatures are agreeably occupied in eating as much as they possibly can, that they may presently retire to bed in a state of fortified fatness.



"FORTIFIED FATNESS."

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The Great Boycott AT the HOTEL D'ANGLETERRE



By Mrs. C. N. Williamson.

IT was at dinner that the Horror first burst upon the guests of the Hôtel d'Angleterre at Métretat, in Brittany.

The season of Métretat had only just begun, but already all the usual people were there; for Métretat was different from other watering-places, and the Angleterre was different from other hotels. Both were exclusive, in the most esoteric sense of that abused term; both were at this time of the year given up to the English. One of the leaders of a certain set which had a hereditary right to look down upon persons merely "smart" had "discovered" Métretat some years before, and had discreetly confided its charms to a few of the brightest and best; consequently a colony of exactly the right people had practically annexed Métretat and the one hotel of the place. Rooms were engaged during one season for another, so that, if intrusive strangers dared try to break the charmed circle, the landlord was able to thwart the attempt by announcing that the house was full.

To spend August and September at the Hôtel d'Angleterre was like being a member of a big country-house party, for everybody knew everybody else, and most of the forty-five or fifty people called each other by their Christian names, or, still better, nicknames invented as a souvenir of some funny adventure, or to fit some pleasant little peculiarity. If strangers contrived to get in they were not really strangers, but guests, or, at least, friends of someone in the set; everyone knew all about them and (unless they were particularly amusing, in which case ancestors could be dispensed with) who their great-grandfathers had been.

There was nothing of the mushroom, *nouveau riche* element among the guests who came each summer to the little, old-fashioned, sleepy village on the rocky coast of Brittany. There was no ostentation, no outshining one another in dress. The women wore short serge skirts and blouses or white piqué frocks till dinner-time, when they changed to the simplest possible gowns; and it was an unwritten law that there should be no jewellery, and no bodices revealing more than an inch of white skin below the collar-bone. As for the golfing or walking men, they lived in knickerbockers until sundown, while the boating and fishing men apparently valued their flannels according to their shabbiness.

The season at the Hôtel d'Angleterre had

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been in full, comfortable, lazy swing for about a week in the sixth August of its possession by the British; and, the dinner-gong having sounded, as usual, at eight o'clock one exquisite blue evening, the party had assembled. As it was a party of friends it was considered pleasant to have several tables, each capable of seating about a dozen. Thus the people who knew one another best could sit together, and when somebody at one table had anything to say to somebody at another he simply turned in his chair and called across the room. Consequently there was a great buzz and chatter; but everybody seemed to know what everybody else was talking about, and all were interested in the same subjects.

"What a shame Kit Vance should have got the flu!" remarked Lord Strathallin (known as "Woodsey"), nodding at one of two unoccupied places at his table. "She and Tom will be a big loss; they're both so ripping. Hope old Dupont won't be such a beast as to let their rooms to any bounding outsiders."

"He wouldn't dare," Lady "Jack" Avery reassured him from across several candle-lit, flower-decked tables.

At this instant the door of the dining-room opened, which it had no business to do, as everyone was in his or her proper place, and the soup was being taken away. There was a shrill rustle of new, rich silk linings, a luscious swish of heavy satin, a burst of white heliotrope scent, a tintinnabulation of many bangles, and a girl came into the room.

So insistently was she heralded to shocked ears and nostrils that, instinctively, eyes turned for confirmation of the announcement, remained fixed upon the vision for a frozen second, then met one another under raised brows for a long, expressive gaze.

Sudden, chill silence had fallen, and the waiters understood its meaning with awe which was half a fearful joy. None of their number envied the dignified head-waiter, whose duty it was to conduct the intruder to her seat. But he did it in a way worthy of a soldier of the Old Guard leading a forlorn hope; while, thrillingly conscious of the effect she was creating, but completely misconstruing its cause, the girl sailed, joyously rustling and tinkling, up the room. The head-waiter advanced to one of the only two unoccupied places (those which should have been sacred to the memory of Sir Thomas Vance and Katherine his wife, unavoidably absent), and drew out the chair next to Lord Strathallin.

The girl, with a hopeful, agreeably anticipating expression on her pretty face, sat down, unfolded and spread out her serviette with a coquettish flourish, then beamed about her with the friendly beginning of a smile. Nobody returned it. Nobody looked at her. It was as if the whole company, surprised into the vulgarity of a stare for a brief moment, had combined in the defensive system of ignoring the invasion. The murmur of pleasantly modulated voices had risen again, and continued with one accord as if there had been no interruption. There was talk of things that had happened at Cowes last week, before people had come on here; gossip of news from those who preferred Scotland even to dear little Métretat; chat of the day's events, golf and fish stories, with an undercurrent of croquet; and excited discussion concerning bridge, past, present, and to come.

The girl listened for a while, eating her dinner, glancing from face to face, dress to dress, taking in everything, and appearing radiantly satisfied still with herself and her surroundings; though occasionally, as fish gave place to roast, and roast to entrée, a faintly puzzled expression lifted the charmingly pencilled dark eyebrows, which contrasted so strikingly with the bright, gold-dusted brown of the wavy hair.

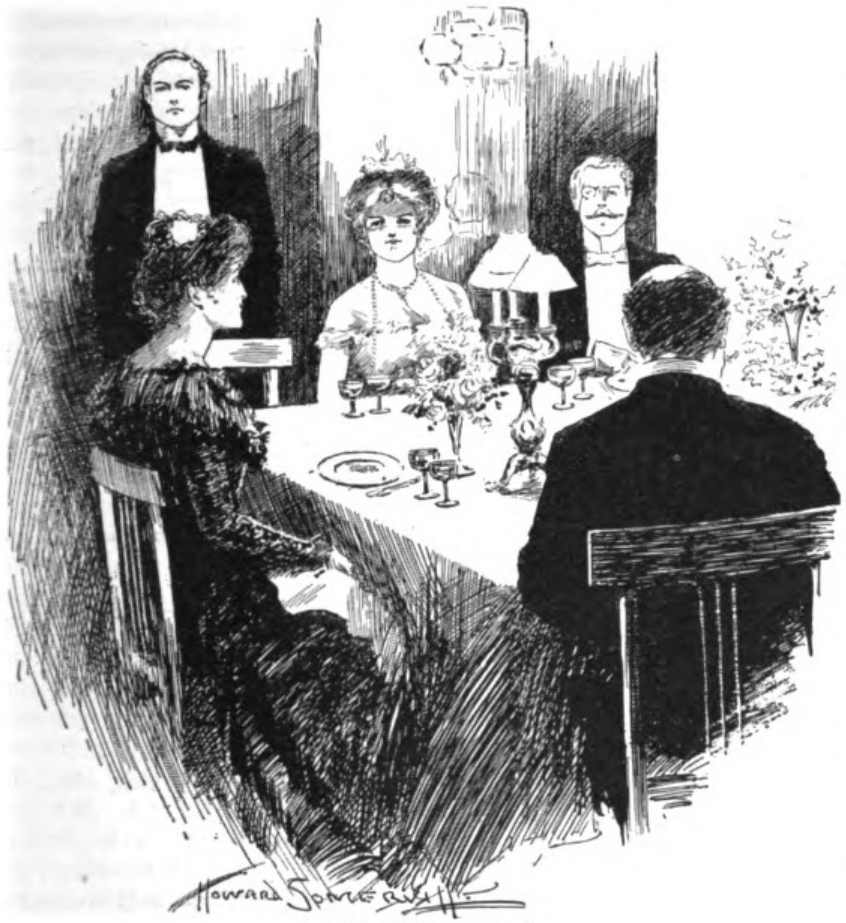
Finally, when she had made due allowance for English stiffness to a stranger, which must be thawed by the sun of the stranger's smile, she could bear her splendid isolation no longer. She listened to the description of a glorious game of bridge, enthusiastically described across her to Lord Strathallin by a pretty, youngish woman in a simple black dress. In a pause which this lady made for breath, the patient new-comer considered that her chance had arrived.

"Is bridge an easy kind of game to learn?" she cheerfully thrust into the opening. "I've heard such a lot of it, over in Denver. I'm an Amurrican."

The woman in black trained a slow, very slow, gaze upon the speaker, permitting it to dwell upon the pink and white face for a moment, or rather to pass through it, as if it were an obstruction which hid a more attractive object beyond. "Really?" she remarked, and removed the gaze.

The girl's complexion became more dazzlingly brilliant than before, thus, at all events, justifying itself as a natural product. She swept a hasty glance around, received an impression of other eyes, fixed and fish-like, noted with a spasm of hope that they were

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"I'M AN AMURRICAN."

women's, and then hurriedly turned towards Lord Strathallin as if—being a man—he might be looked upon as a port to be sought in storm.

"My goodness!" she exclaimed in a half whisper, accompanied by a winning appeal from under long lashes, "*is* that lady snubbing me, do you suppose?"

As it happened, the lady in the plain black dress was a bright, particular star in that set which came to Métretat each year to enjoy its own exclusive society. Why this high place had been accorded her, nobody knew precisely, for she was neither beautiful, titled, rich, nor superlatively agreeable. But she did and said things in an original way, and somehow she had made herself indispensable. Lord Strathallin had just been admitted to her friendship, and he had no mind to sacrifice it for a strange young person who, on her entrance to the room, had been audibly christened a "Horror" by Mrs. Llynn-Gryffyth. The girl was incredibly pretty, though the worst possible form, and if he had been addressed by her when no eyes were there to see he would have answered with a certain pleasure. As it was, however, he knew what his country expected of him, and would not disappoint it.

He looked at the girl, whose accent had proclaimed her "Amurrican" before her words confessed it. He looked at the diamond butterfly perched on high above yellow-brown masses of hair; at the necklace of large, glistening pearls twined round her firm young throat, and falling in a second strand to her slim waist; at the three or four quaintly-fashioned ornaments (one of which was a tiny American flag in diamonds, rubies, and sapphires) scintillating among the laces on her girlish bosom; at the low-cut bodice of her peach-blossom satin dress; looking not in ostentatious disapproval, but with a finely-marked, critical indifference. "I beg your pardon," he said; "I don't think I quite know what you mean."

The girl's question was not one to be repeated, with a tag of explanation attached. She blushed very red, and wriggled her pretty shoulders in a shrug which aimed at disdain, but indicated distress. "It doesn't matter at all," she retorted; and gave herself up wholly to the green peas, which she eked out as a valuable screen for emotion, by eating one at a time. She had come last into the dining-room, but she was the first to leave it, sweeping from the room, with her head very high; and, when a waiter had closed the door behind her, contemptuously amused glances were exchanged. She was a vulgar little horror, that was clear. Pretty, oh, yes, in a meretricious way, but quite too terrible; covered with jewels like an idol; altogether distinctly a creature, and to be frowned relentlessly down. If one were even civil in a weak moment, she was evidently the kind to take advantage; and if she were not to remain a flamboyant weed in this pleasant garden, she must be firmly discouraged from the first. Indeed, it was monstrous that Dupont should

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have taken her in; he was well aware that this was not to be considered an ordinary hotel, and if he knew what was for his own good in the end he would not begin to fill up any chance vacancy with rank outsiders, who would simply ruin everything and make Métretat impossible to the very people who had annexed it.

Everybody wondered whether the Horror had been sufficiently crushed to slink off in a proper state of annihilation to her basely acquired quarters, or whether enough brazen impudence remained to carry her into the big, square hall, where the coterie elected to drink coffee after dinner. But the American flag is not easily to be torn from its standard by a foe, even in overwhelming numbers. Indomitably, defiantly, it waved over the particular sofa in the corner and the table adjacent which had come to be looked upon as Mrs. Llynn-Gryffyth's property.



"THE PRETTY GIRL IN PINK SATIN SAT REMOTE."

That corner—the pleasantest in the hall, and made beautiful by a tall lamp with a ruffly, red silk shade, given to the hotel by Mrs. Llynn-Gryffyth—was promptly tabooed. As if a river had been turned from its normal course, the tide of evening frocks and dinner jackets flowed in one compact wave towards an opposite end of the hall, lampless, but uncontaminated. The pretty girl in pink satin sat remote, shimmering and scintillating like a jewel cast up by the sea on a desert island. She drank black coffee, and read (or seemed to read) a paper-covered novel with absorbed interest; and she "stuck it out," as somebody expressed it, at least until after the crowd had drifted elsewhere, to ping-pong, to bridge, to billiards, or to dance in the large, bare music-room, according to taste and age. After that, no one knew or cared what became of her, since she had ceased to offend with her undesired and undesirable presence.

Dicky Wickham, or "Wicky Dickham," as he was more often called, a mild, elderly bachelor who was popular because he always did what he was asked, and had also some very pretty little tricks, was told off by a couple of half-amused, half-annoyed girls to "tackle Dupont" and ask him why in the name of goodness, etc., etc.

He was gone for twenty minutes, and then returned primed with information. Dupont appeared to be grieved, but not penitent. He had actually defended himself, alleging that, after all, the Angleterre was an hotel, subject to the laws which govern other houses of public entertainment. If he had rooms disengaged, he insisted that he could not turn customers away. He had even ventured to suggest that, if his patrons wished the whole hotel reserved for themselves and their friends, they should club together and pay the price, with *pension*, for any rooms which happened to be vacant. The benighted man had further—when heated by controversy—gone so far as to hint that, as most of his guests stipulated for reduced terms on account of long tenancy, his season was not really so profitable as if the hotel were filled with people who came and went. As for the young person in question (Dupont had referred to her as a lady), she had arrived that afternoon with her maid, and had demanded a suite with two

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bedrooms and a private sitting-room, for the remaining weeks of August. Such a suite Dupont had on his hands, owing to the detention in England of Sir Thomas and Lady Vance. In deference to the prejudice of his distinguished patrons against strangers and foreigners Dupont had named a very large price, which the young lady had agreed to pay without an instant's hesitation. She appeared to be *comme il faut;* when she had written her name, "Miss Jenny Calmour," in the visitors' book she had remarked, as if by way of furnishing a reference, that her father was John Calmour, the "canned-soup man, you know." Dupont had vaguely associated the name and canned-soupiness with millions, and had felt himself justified as a landlord. This was the story which explained the apparition of the Horror; and though all grumbled as with one voice, the more just-minded (these were men) reluctantly pronounced that Dupont was within his rights, and unless the invader could be routed she must be endured.

Thus the siege began.

Miss Jenny Calmour, very pink as to the cheeks, defiantly bright as to the eyes, appeared in public in the most elaborate costumes, which she changed invariably three times a day, and she never wore the same one twice. Her hats were large, picturesque, and abundantly covered with drooping feathers or flowers; her shoes were exceedingly small, pointed of toe and high of heel, and usually they matched her dress in colour. Yet nobody gave her a glance; she might have been a ghost, invisible to the human eye, to be looked *through*, never at. Nevertheless, the women knew what she had on, and knew that, if Métretat had been Biarritz or Ostend and she had been a young Princess, everything would have been in good taste. But it *was* Métretat; therefore everything was execrable, and the "boycott of American canned goods," as Jack Avery dubbed it, continued unabated.

While all the world of the Hôtel d'Angleterre and the few villas owned by the right sort of people (there were no longer any others at Métretat) went bathing, golfing, walking, or boating, or played famous matches of croquet or tennis, Miss Jenny Calmour, exquisitely dressed and smelling of white heliotrope, picked her lonely way along the beach with a book in her hand, her haughtily erect little head shaded with a chiffon and lace parasol to match her frock, or took drives inland in the one landau which the modest watering-place possessed. At night, when the hotel rang with a merry confusion of laughter, ping-pong, the tinkle of music, and of feet that danced in time, Miss Jenny Calmour sat in the corner which had once been Mrs. Llynn-Gryffyth's and was now hers, proudly introspective, or plunged in the inevitable Tauchnitz.

In this manner passed seven golden August days, and if the American girl had opened her lips for any other purpose than eating or breathing, it had been only in intercourse with servants or tradespeople. One morning, while Métretat bathed in a warm, blue sea under sparkling sunshine, she was seen (although nobody looked her way) to go to the village post-office, an expression of peculiar firmness graven on her dimpled chin. She wrote out a telegram in English and sent it. It was memorable at the post-office, because the message covered two forms and cost 18frs. During the afternoon of the same day a *petit bleu* was handed to her while she was drinking tea on the otherwise deserted balcony. She brightened on reading it and put it in her pocket. That evening at dinner her appetite, which had failed somewhat of late, was observed by the waiter assigned to her table to have improved.

The following morning she drove in her landau to the distant railway station, and Lord Strathallin (who saw her on his way to the links) wondered if she were going away, vanquished—luggage and maid to follow.

But she had not turned her back on Métretat; she had merely met a train. From it stepped a big man, with crisply curling grey hair, a smooth-shaven red face, well-featured and shrewd, with the chin of Napoleon and the eye of a financier. He was tall beyond the common run of men, and the pronounced check of his travelling clothes made him loom even larger than he really was. He looked expectantly up and down the platform, and showed a set of teeth white and sound as hazel nuts when a pink muslin vision flashed into sight with a cry of "Poppa!"

The big man had with him for luggage only a bag, which he styled his "grip." He took his daughter cheerily by the arm, swinging the "grip" with his free hand; and so they marched side by side to the waiting landau.

"I suppose we couldn't send this thing up to the hotel and walk, could we? I guess, though, you ain't dressed for a tramp?" said John Calmour, of tinned-soup fame.

"Yes, but I am, poppa; I'd just love to,"

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replied the girl. And the landau went off with the "grip" on the back seat, looking like a very big nutshell with a very small kernel.

There was a short cut from the railway-station which diverged from the main road, passed the golf-links, and then dipped down to a path along the rocks that overhung the sea. By the time that the father and daughter had talked about her telegram to him and his to her, his sudden journey from London (where he had been transacting important business), and the girl had thanked him at least a dozen times for making it, they had reached a rocky seat out of sight from everyone except fishermen and gulls.

"Let's sit down and look around," said the big man. "This is kind of refreshing. Seems a nice place, Métretat." (He pronounced the last syllable to rhyme with "cat.") "I bet you sent for me in such a dickens of a hurry because I was tomfool enough to write that the London climate in August took it out of a fellow, and you wanted to get me here, eh?"

"I did want to get you here," admitted Jenny, digging the ferrule of her smart parasol into a hole in the rock. "But it wasn't only that. I guess I was homesick. It seemed to me, yesterday, that I should just have a *fit* if I couldn't see you right away, poppa."

He threw a sudden, sharp glance at the downcast profile. Something in the tone of the girl's voice had struck him as unusual.

"You're looking a bit peaked, Sissy," he said. "Ain't the air what it was cracked up to be?"

"Sissy" swallowed audibly, once, twice; and the third attempt to dispose of a certain obstruction in the throat ended in a sob. Her little nose turned suddenly pink, and great round tears, like those shed by a child, came tumbling from between the long lashes.

John Calmour's face grew three shades redder than before. "Why, little gurl—why, little gurlie!" he repeated. "*Crying?* It must be something mighty bad to make you do that. I haven't seen you so much as pipe your eyes for a coon's age—not since you were ten, anyhow. What is it, my pretty? Tell the old man, and if there's anything he can do you can just count on him every time. Why, that's what he's *for*, ain't it? I guess you're the only thing he's got on this blessed earth, and he's bound to look after you."

Jenny's hands covered her face, which showed flushed and moist, like a wet rose, between the slim fingers. A big, red-brown hand was patting her Leghorn hat, in convenient interstices among the nodding gardenias; and a vein was throbbing hard in each of John Calmour's temples.

"Oh, poppa, I am a born idiot, but I—I—just can't *help* it," sobbed the girl who had held her head so high before the enemy. "I had to send for you. I couldn't stand it any longer, here all alone. It's been awful. I've been 'most ready to die; but I guess"—with a spasm of defiant pride—"nobody knows it."

"For the land's sake, honey, tell your old dad what's been the matter."

"It's — it's the people," Jenny wept, with her cheek on his shoulder, much to the detriment of the hat. "They're wicked, cruel Beasts."



"TELL YOUR OLD DAD WHAT'S BEEN THE MATTER."

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John Calmour's jaw squared itself, intensifying a lurking suggestion that the bulldog phase had left a stronger impression than any of his other incarnations. "Oh, *that's* it, is it?" he growled. "It's the people. So they've been beasts to you, have they? Women jealous?"

"Not they," cried Jenny. "They despise me. They think I'm the dirt under their feet."

"Do they?" said Calmour, in a quiet voice, which men knew when hundreds of thousands were hanging on a word of his. "Tell me all about it, pretty."

Then Jenny told him. She began at the beginning and worked slowly up, punctuating with stifled sobs or pathetic little sniffs.

"I thought it would be so lovely here," she said. "I read in a society paper, while I was with you at the Carlton in London, poppa, all about the Hôtel d'Angleterre at Métretat, how 'unique' it was (that's the paper's word), and the house full of people of the very tip-topest set in England. When you had to stay on, and told me I must take Josephine and go off somewhere to the country to amuse myself, it seemed as if Métretat would be just the right place. I thought it would be fun to know a lot of English lords and ladies, and I had whole heaps of pretty dresses and things to show off. I was sure I should have a nice time. The first night at dinner, when nobody spoke to me, and made fishes' eyes if they happened to look my way by mistake, I supposed that was English manners, and they were only shy and stiff till they knew me. But I soon found out *that* was a mistake! Oh, poppa, I never was snubbed before, but I've had enough this one week to last me all my life."

"Why should they snub you?" queried Calmour, with a dangerous flickering of the nostrils, like a vicious horse.

"Because I'm an Amurrican, for one thing, and because they all know each other and call each other 'Mouse,' and 'Bat,' and every kind of queer nickname, even the quite old ones; and they're just wild at having a strange girl among them. They love the Angleterre and think it belongs to them. They've been trying to freeze me out, poppa, as hard as they could, but I *wouldn't* give in, though all the time inside I've felt as sick as sick, and sometimes it was all I could do not to burst out crying and jump up from the table and run away. Not that I care a red cent for any of them; it isn't that. Oh, I don't know exactly *what* it is; but it's the awfullest experience I ever had, feeling that they thought—because I was different from them, somehow, and here all alone without any momma, like the other girls—that I was a horrid creature. I wouldn't hurt a fly, poppa, you know it; and I don't want really to do them any harm; but—but I *should* like to make them sorry."

"Maybe you shall," said John Calmour. "You say they love this Angleterre hotel and think it belongs to 'em. I suppose it would be a blow to the lot if they were packed off?"

"They'd be out of their wits with rage," said Jenny.

"Well, we'll see," said her father.

"Poppa, whatever *do* you mean? I know by your face you've got a plan."

Calmour whistled, and looked introspective for a moment. Then he said: "They want to chase you away, don't they? What I mean is, that *you're* going to chase them instead."

It was luncheon time at the Hôtel d'Angleterre when Miss Calmour returned with her father, and the two had that meal served in her private sitting-room. Soon after, John Calmour, large, calm, and smoking a cigar, strolled into the *bureau* where sat the landlord, M. Dupont, a shrewd, somewhat melancholy little Breton. The American had made no inquiries yet regarding accommodation for the night, but M. Dupont had one or two unoccupied bedrooms, and intended, if the millionaire wished to stay, to make him comfortable. The little man had a suitable respect for millionaires, and he rose as the large figure in checked flannel lounged through the doorway.

Both said good-day in English, upon which language M. Dupont prided himself, not without cause. Then the Breton waited deferentially for the expected request for a room; or perhaps he prepared to shed reproaches with a responsibility-disclaiming though regretful shrug, in case Mr. Calmour brought up the subject of the boycott.

Having puffed in silence at his cigar for a long moment, the big man's steel-grey eyes caught those of the landlord as if they pounced upon a prey. "How much will you take for this hotel, cash down on the nail?" he abruptly demanded, in his pleasant, though slightly nasal, voice.

"I beg monsieur's pardon," returned the Breton, not sure whether he had understood, or whether the American were joking.

"I'm making you an offer for this hotel," went on John Calmour. "I want to buy it."

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"But, monsieur, it is not for sale."

"My experience has been, as a business man, that most things are for sale if the price runs up high enough. Now, I want your hotel, and when I want a thing I'm willing to pay for it. I've calculated that for the place as it stands, with the goodwill, you might expect to get, say, about 125,000dols. You can have my cheque for that sum, mounseer, as quick as I can write it, if you are on to make the deal."

Dupont fairly gasped, but he was sufficiently master of his faculties to do a rapid sum in mental arithmetic. A hundred and twenty-five thousand American dollars bounded up to a goodly amount when converted into francs. But, then, he had never heard of business being done by lightning.

"I thank you, monsieur," he said. "It is something to reflect upon."

"That's where you're wrong, sir," returned John Calmour. "It's to take or to leave. The hotel's no use to me unless I can have it two hours before dinner to-night, because there'd be some little arrangements to make."

The Breton started. "Mon Dieu, but it is impossible!"

"No, it ain't, if you look at it calmly. There's lots of time. I'll give you twenty minutes to decide, if necessary; but I'd sooner have it fixed up at once. That's my way of doing business, and it's panned out pretty well so far as I've gone. See here; to pay for the extra inconvenience to you, mounseer, I don't mind throwing in another 10,000dols."

Poor Dupont clutched at his damp forehead with his damp fingers. "If you please, monsieur, I will take the twenty minutes," he implored.

"I thought you were going to say you'd take the money. But all right; I'll just sit here and finish my cigar while you make up your mind."

The Breton sank into his chair at the desk. Calmour also sat down, crossed his legs, and watched the smoke-rings, which he made very successfully—as he did most things.

Never had Dupont been obliged to think so quickly; but he collected his forces like a general surprised in the night.

His season, he reminded himself, existed (on paper) from June till October. The place, however, scarcely paid expenses till July. Even then custom was but casual and uncertain until early August, when the English came. After that time the hotel was practically full through September; but, as he had assured Mr. Wickham the other night, the long-staying patrons paid the least. If he made 20,000frs. profit in a year he was lucky; sometimes he made less; and the work was wearing. He was past middle age and it would be agreeable to retire. Here was the chance for which, in bad hours, he had ardently wished. It might never come again; and this mad millionaire's offer was far more than he would have expected to get had he thought of selling out. But, then, the suddenness!

"My guests, monsieur!" he exclaimed, aloud. "How could I explain——"

"Don't worry about that. *I'll* explain. I don't mean to turn the folks out. All you've got to do is to say 'Done' and pocket my cheque. You can wire to my bankers in London, if you want, and make sure I'm the man I pretend to be. Then you can pack up your baggage at your own convenience, and go on a spree to Paris, if it suits you. You look kind of tired, as if a vacation would do you good."

When the twenty minutes were up John Calmour had out his cheque-book.

That evening there was a more elaborate dinner than usual, and, for some reason, champagne was served to everybody. No one understood why this was, but when the waiters intimated that the wine was free nearly everybody drank it, to the extent of several glasses each.

Nothing else of an unusual nature had occurred, so far as was known in the hotel, except that there had been two new arrivals. One was the Horror's father, who, having brought no evening things in his "grip," disgusted the coterie by dining in his travelling clothes. The other was an exceedingly good-looking young man, for whom, by means of a little crowding at the table, room had been made next Mrs. Llynn-Gryffyth. Judging from the reception he met with, he must have known almost everybody in the hotel and have been liked by all. Mrs. Llynn-Gryffyth and many others called him Bill; Dicky Wickham and a few others addressed him as Lord Everest; he looked a good deal at Jenny Calmour, pronounced the dinner excellent, the champagne a perfect marvel for an "hotel treat," and talked much with his intimates at the table of a cotillon which apparently he had come over from England to help make a success. The boycott of Jenny was extended to her father, and the two, in intervals between their own private murmurs, had plenty of time to

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listen to the conversation, which concerned favours for the coming cotillon; the people who had been invited from the Métretat villas, and one or two other neighbouring watering-places where, it seemed, there really were a "few human beings who would do, at a pinch, for a cotillon."

When the fruit had come on (delicious little wild strawberries from somewhere in the north, at which novelty there was a general buzz of delight), John Calmour rose from his seat. Instead of leaving the table, as people who noticed his move supposed that he would do, he stood still in his place, coolly surveying the room, a hand on the back of his chair.

"Ladies and gentlemen," he began, in the loud voice of one about to call attention to the first words of a speech.

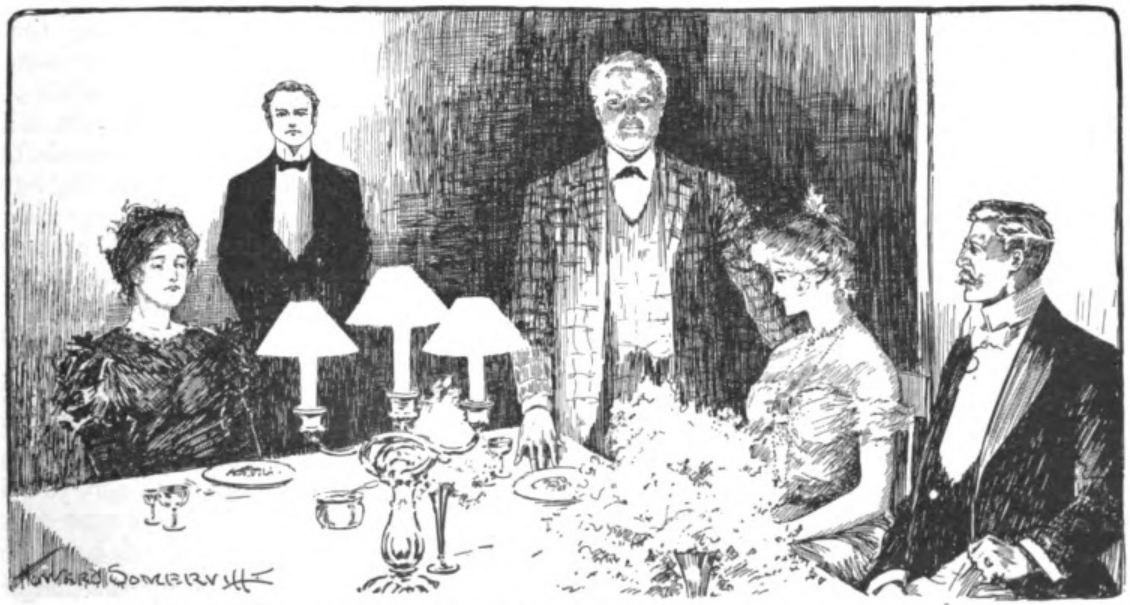
Everyone looked up, astonished and resentful at the audacious interruption. "Is the man intoxicated?" Mrs. Llynn-Gryffyth was heard to ask in a stage-whisper.

"Ladies and gentlemen," he repeated. "I am glad to have gathered, from certain expressions I could not help hearing, that Mounseer Dupont, your late landlord. I dare say he won't forget to send them in. As regards the future, I must explain that an Amurrican is something like an Arab. Who eats his salt is sacred, no matter how badly they may have behaved before the salt went around. That being the case, I don't wish or intend to speak out my feelings about the way in which you English people, men and women, have treated a young girl placed by accident alone and unprotected in your midst. She wasn't good enough to associate with you when this was an hotel; but now that it's her father's country house it is by her request that I invite you all to remain under my roof as my guests as long as you please."

He paused. Two or three men sprang up; and there were murmurs of "No, no," "Absurd," "Impossible," all over the room.

John Calmour gave them a moment, then, when he received no more definite response, he began again.

"I have invited you to stay as my guests," he repeated. "Those who choose to accept are welcome. Those who don't will no doubt think it delicate to move on some-



"I HAVE TO INFORM YOU THAT THE ANGLETERRE, AS AN HOTEL, CEASED TO EXIST AT EXACTLY A QUARTER PAST THREE."

the dinner and the champagne have met with your approval. This is a satisfaction to me, as I have to inform you that the Angleterre, as an hotel, ceased to exist at exactly a quarter past three this afternoon. It is now my private house, and you have been entertained at dinner as my guests. The meal will not be charged in your bills, which, by the way, up to the hour I mentioned, are payable to where else as soon as they can. While they remain in this house, I must remind them, they eat my bread, and I and my daughter are their host and hostess. Come, Jenny; I've said all I've got to say. Let you and me go into the hall and have coffee, which will be ready for the others if they like to follow."

He gave his daughter an arm, and they

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went away together without a backward glance.

"B—y *Jove!*" ejaculated somebody, it was never quite known who. But the exclamation gave relief. It broke the spell.

"What's the tall party driving at?" asked Lord Everest of the company in general; and everybody began to tell the story at once, each one with a slightly different version. Yet the conclusion reached by all was identical. The Horror was the horror; her father was a fiend; and there was nothing to do save beat a retreat, immediately and with such dignity as might be preserved in the scramble. But there was no disguising the fact that it was a blow—a heavy blow. It seemed almost too bad to be true, though it must be true, or that brute would not have dared his impudent harangue. To go—to be turned out, bag and baggage, at an hour's notice, from their own, very own private Eden, at the beginning of the season, with the weather perfect and their plans made—such charming plans, too!—and all because they had very properly shown this vulgar ruffian's daughter her place, and kept her in it. It was enough to drive one to manslaughter—for it wouldn't be murder.

Everest listened intently to the jumble of explanation and execration; then, when a few of his friends had paused for breath, he shocked the company by bursting into ribald laughter.

"Good old boy! I'm hanged if I don't respect the chap!" he broke out. "If you want my opinion, he's served you all jolly well right; you deserve what you've got. And you've eaten his dinner! Jove! what a *coup!* It's Titanic. The man must have paid £20,000 at least for his revenge. But I'll bet he doesn't grudge the money. Oh, these Yankees! They're marvellous!"

Mrs. Llynn-Gryffyth rose. "I think," she remarked, with dignity, "we should be wiser to go and see that our servants begin packing, rather than sit squabbling here. As for you, Bill, you are as bad as—as bad as a pro-Boer."

"Wait a minute, everybody," said Everest. "Of course, I don't know what anybody else is going to do, but I've been invited to visit this amazing old Johnny, and I intend to accept his invitation. I expect to enjoy myself as well as I ever did in my life, and I shouldn't be surprised if the cotillon came off yet. Anyone else think of stopping on? Because, if so, when I go out into the hall for a chat with him, I may as well tell our host how many people there'll be in his house-party."

"I'd rather die than stay," announced Mrs. Llynn-Gryffyth.

Lady "Jack" Avery laughed hysterically. "Bill's right," she giggled. "It will be a glorious lark. *I* never did anything to the girl. I'll stop as chaperon. She'll need one."

"It's like losing an eye-tooth to give up the golf," sighed Dicky Wickham.

"And the bathing," "And the fishing," came in murmurs from other quarters.

"Let's take him at his word. It will be the joke of the century!" exclaimed Strathallin.

Everest turned and glanced at him, his brown, laughing face suddenly grave. "Look here, I'm responsible for the proposal," said he. "None of you would have thought of it if it hadn't been for me. I'm the only innocent one of the lot, therefore I'm the only man who can engineer the thing with decency. Those of you who are going in for this joke have got to give me their word to behave themselves afterwards as they would in a friend's house, or I'll be shot if I'll have anything to do with it."

In five minutes Everest had three times five candidates and as many promises. Armed with these he went forth, while the banished ones slipped away, and John Calmour's fifteen future guests remained in the *salle à manger* to await the return of the herald.

He went out into the big hall. In the corner, under the red-shaded lamp, sat the master of the house—and the situation—his daughter by his side. Everest crossed to them with a smart, soldierly step.

"Let me congratulate you, Mr. Calmour—on your house, you know," he said. "Awfully jolly house to stop in, and very good of you to ask us. I got here only to-night, just in time to dress for dinner. Will you introduce me to Miss Calmour? I'm Lord Everest—Bill, my friends call me, because people are always sending me such a lot, I suppose."

Solemnly, but with a twinkle in his eyes, which he did not remove from the young man's face, the millionaire formally introduced Lord Everest to his daughter Jenny. The girl looked up. Her martyrdom had not entirely destroyed her sense of humour, and she broke into a laugh. Everest laughed, too—a nice, friendly, young-sounding laugh.

"I'm no end obliged to Mr. Calmour for asking me, you know," he said, drawing up a chair. "So are we all, though—er—some of

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"I'M LORD EVEREST—BILL, MY FRIENDS CALL ME."

us have engagements at Dinard to-morrow; but with fifteen or sixteen stopping on the house won't seem empty, will it? Is it true you are going to give a cotillon next week, Miss Calmour? I do hope it is. I heard so, and brought some rather pretty favours with me from Paris in the hope that you'd accept them from me. You will, won't you? And—it's rather selfish, I'm afraid, to try and cut in before any other chap; but you're sure to be asked by a dozen men at least, and I shall lose my chance. May I lead the cotillon with you?"

"I should love it," said Jenny, laughing and dimpling. "Can I, poppa?"

"I guess it will be all right," said Calmour.

So the great boycott ended and the great joke began. Right royally it was carried out on both sides. The cotillon was a huge success, and Jenny reigned among her guests like a young queen. People said that Everest's game had been clear from the first. He would eventually propose to the girl because her father was a millionaire, and she would accept him because he was an earl. As to the facts, everybody was right; but as to the motives, they were wrong. When Lord Everest proposed to Jenny Calmour, after four weeks of the queerest visit ever made, it was because he was very much in love with her, and thought her the dearest as well as the prettiest little girl he had ever seen. She accepted him because, in her opinion, he was one of the two perfect men in the world; and poppa was the other.

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With a Camera in a Keddah;

OR, HOW ELEPHANTS ARE CAUGHT ALIVE.

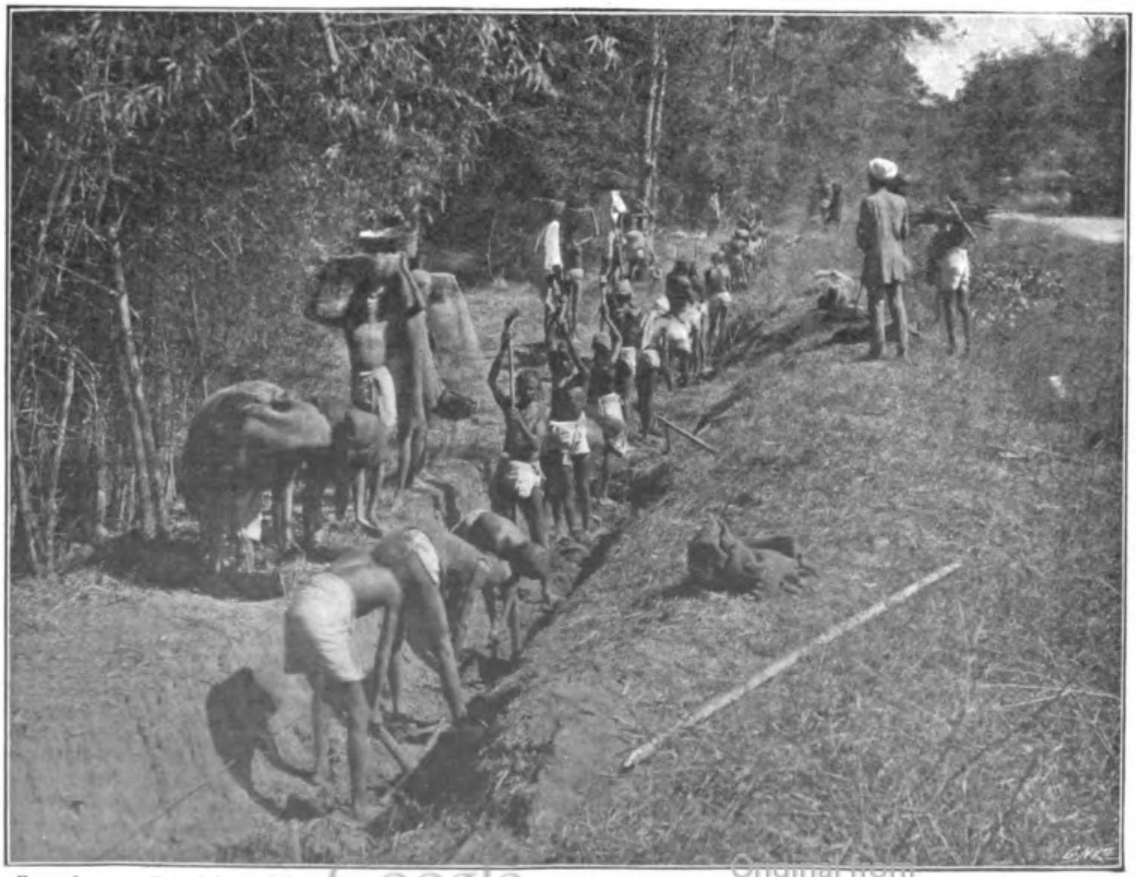
By John Swaffham.

THERE are, I hope, not many people in England who have not read the story of Little Toomai, who was called Toomai of the Elephants, and of Kala Nag, the fighting elephant of the keddahs who had served the Government of India for forty-seven years after he was taken and trained, and of "Machua Appa, who was so great that he had no other name but was just Machua Appa, chief of the native drivers in the keddahs of the Elephant Department of the Government of India."

Once, long ago, men hunted elephants in India as now they hunt them in Africa, only the white man's powder and shot was not then in the hand of every native hunter, so that the elephant survives to this day, not in twos and threes as in Africa, but in dozens and in hundreds. In old times, also, the natives dug great pits, but because the elephant is a heavy beast he was often killed, more often still maimed by the fall. Hence the practice was not very general.

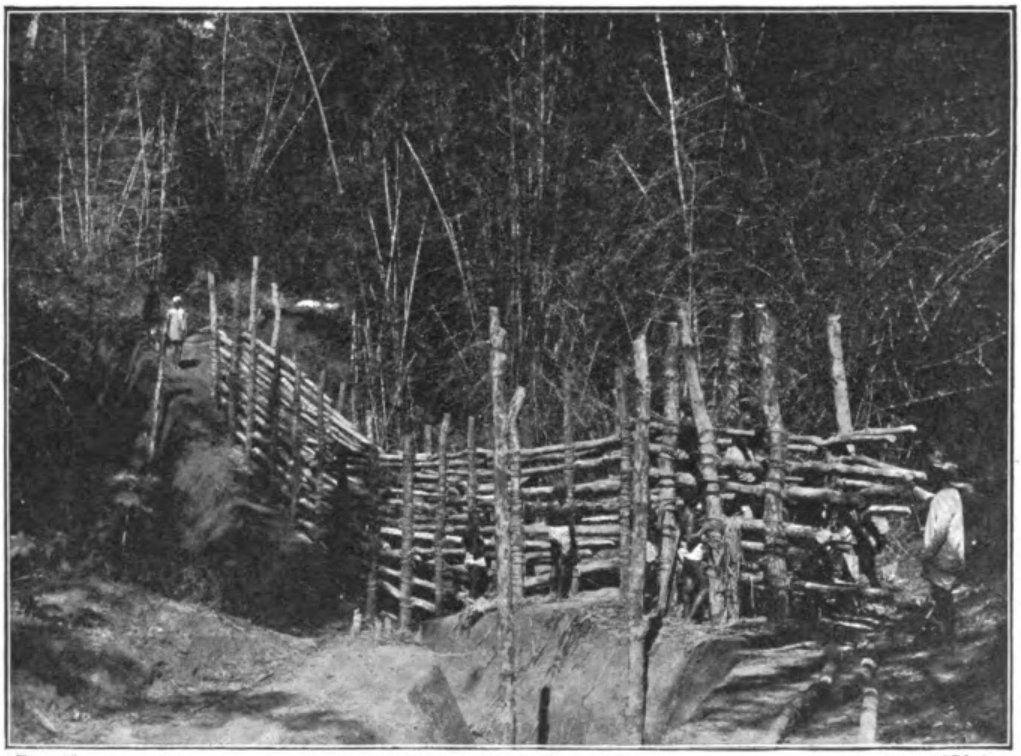
However, it had a certain vogue, being the easiest and least risky way in which an unarmed man could take the greatest of beasts. If, too, you wished to have the dead body only, the drawbacks in the way of maiming or damage to the animal ceased to exist. Any possible danger in dealing with the enraged and trapped victim was obviated by planting a huge stake with a sharp point in the centre of your pit. Transfixed on this, his struggles soon caused such a flow of blood that he died without further bother.

The keddah system of driving a herd into a stockade and there impounding the live beasts is no new invention. The hunters have used it for hundreds of years, just as, only two centuries ago, the men of Athole used to make great drivings of the deer in the country where now are Forest Lodge and Fealar—the great moors which lie under Cairntoul and Ben-y-Gloe, in the heart of the Grampians. Here, on great occasions, the Duke used to organize drives. The deer were driven into a place fenced with high wattles and then dispatched at leisure. Simi-



From a] THE BEGINNING OF ALL THINGS—DIGGING THE TRENCHES. *[Photo.*

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From a] BUILDING A NATIVE STOCKADE. *[Photo.*

larly, the hill Rajahs would hunt the elephant herds when they came down annually to the plain jungles; but the matter was haphazard and go-as-you-please. Now, the sircar preserves the elephant so strictly that to kill him, unless he be a "rogue," involves a heavy fine. A whole department of Government has been organized with the one duty of taking him alive. This is the keddah service, and I would give you here a sketch of the working of a keddah.

A whole book has been written on the subject — Sanderson's "Thirteen Years Among the Wild Beasts in India"—a book



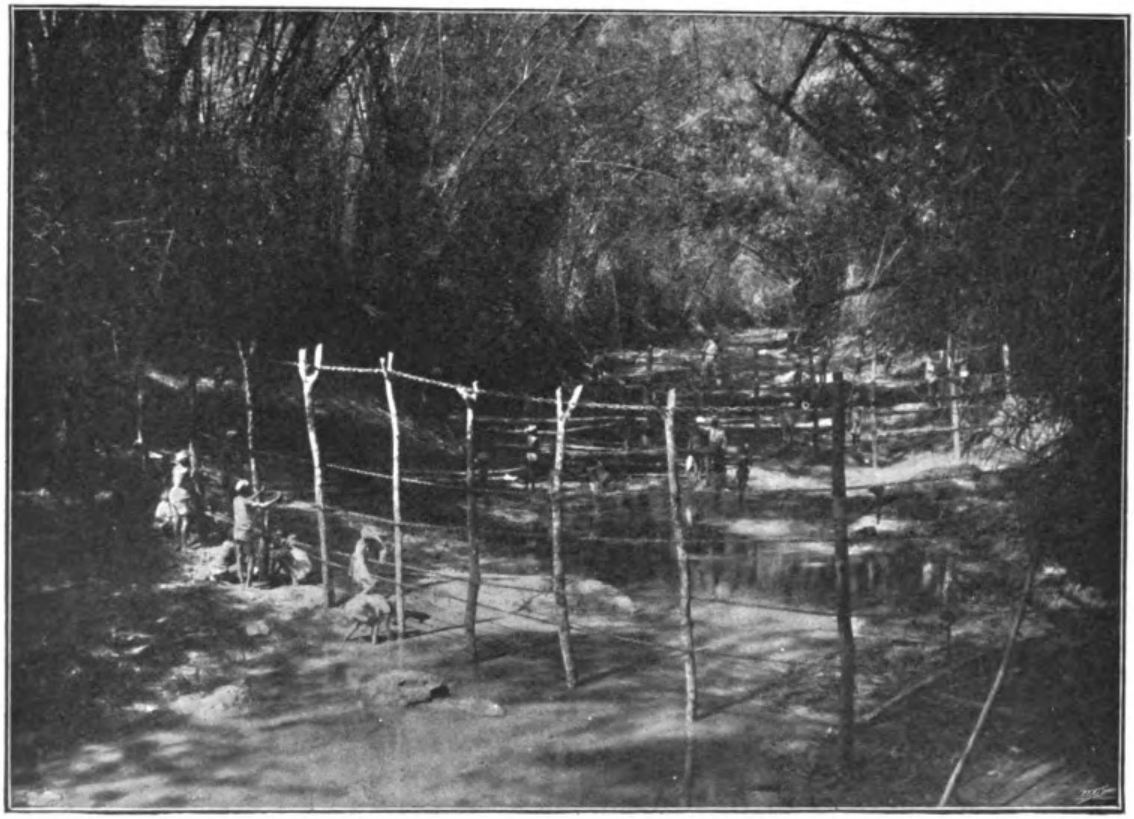
A KEDDAH TRENCH, WITH LINING AND CROSS THWARTS OF BAMBOO TO PREVENT SUBSIDENCE OF THE LOOSE EARTH SIDES.
From a Photo.

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curiously interesting for many reasons, not least because it shows how chance works to bring a man to the place for which, in the result, it must seem that he was created. In 1864 Sanderson went out, a young man with no particular aptitudes, to grow coffee in Mysore. Almost immediately the plant failed after its periodical manner, and the young man was at a loose end. After various changes of scene, and within nine years, he had successfully carried out his first keddah and was embarked on his life's career.

The principle of a keddah is somewhat like that of the old duck-decoys which used to be so common in Norfolk and the Fen counties. Both are founded upon the curious foolishness of creatures which are, in many respects, among the wisest of created things. A duck comes into a decoy because he is incurably curious. He knows that a dog is his worst enemy, but seeing a dog jumping in and out between wicker screens arranged along the bank of a narrow channel, he at once swims up to see what manner of game the dog is playing. A net is dropped across the broad end of the "funnel," and the duck's curiosity has cost him his life. An elephant is wiser than the duck: he is the wisest of all wild animals. Hence his troubles come upon him not through a foolish curiousness, but because of the less futile, though nearly as imbecile, habit of crass superstition. Like the bird, he knows that man is his enemy. Yet when surrounded by a single ring of men he shrinks from the moral effort required to face it and break out. More, he knows himself in the toils, and the least use of reason would show him that to be surrounded and yet to have an easy path of escape left open are two incompatible things. Nevertheless, he takes the path of easy escape and finds himself in the keddah.

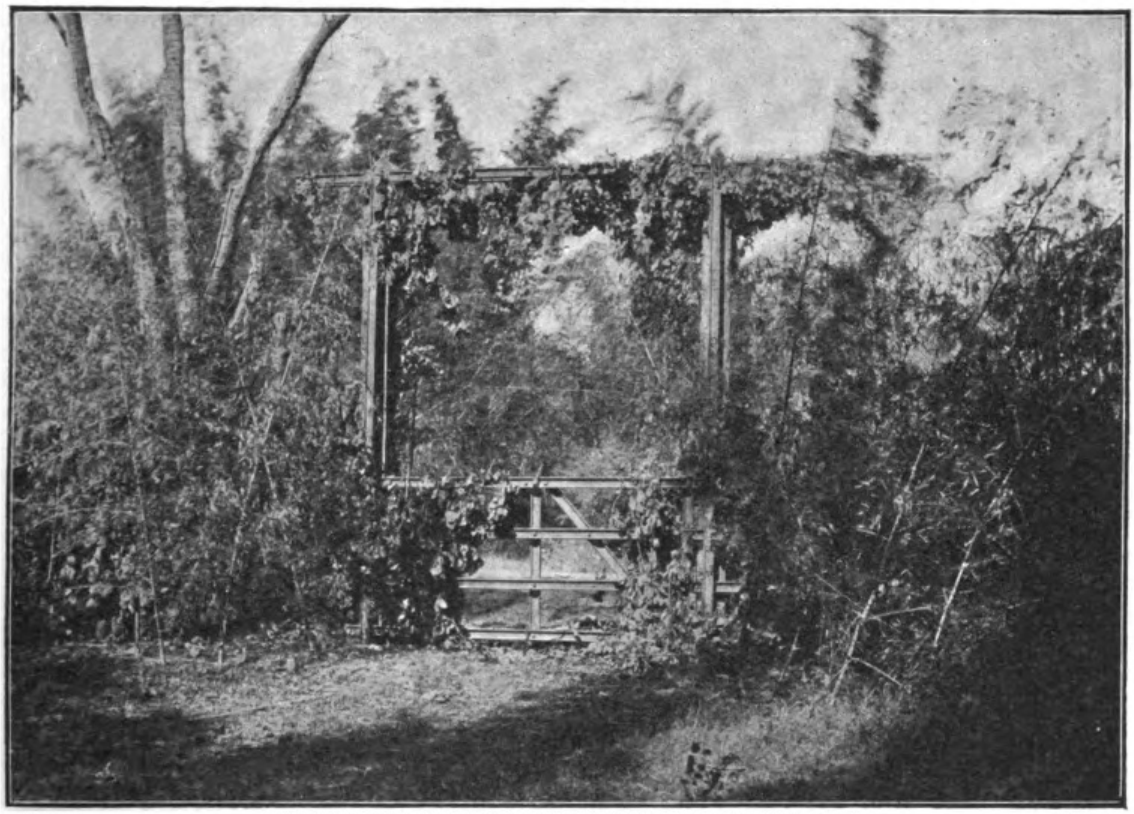
I may give you an illustration of this folly



From a] BARRICADING A STREAM WHICH RUNS THROUGH THE KEDDAH LINES. *[Photo.*

on the part of "my lord." When Sanderson Sahib was alive any elephant which broke lines was shot dead. Escaping servitude in life he found liberty with death. Sanderson passed away and his chief Hindu assistant stepped into his place. Like many, if not most, natives, this man has a superstitious dread of actually taking life. As a result elephants escaped and communicated their discoveries to the herds, who now continually break away at the critical last moment. Perhaps part of the decline may be due to the absence of the genius which Sanderson brought to his task, but that failure to maintain his shooting policy may be justly held accountable for many

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From a] SANDERSON'S IRON DROP-GATE AS IT CLOSED BEHIND THE HERD. *[Photo.*

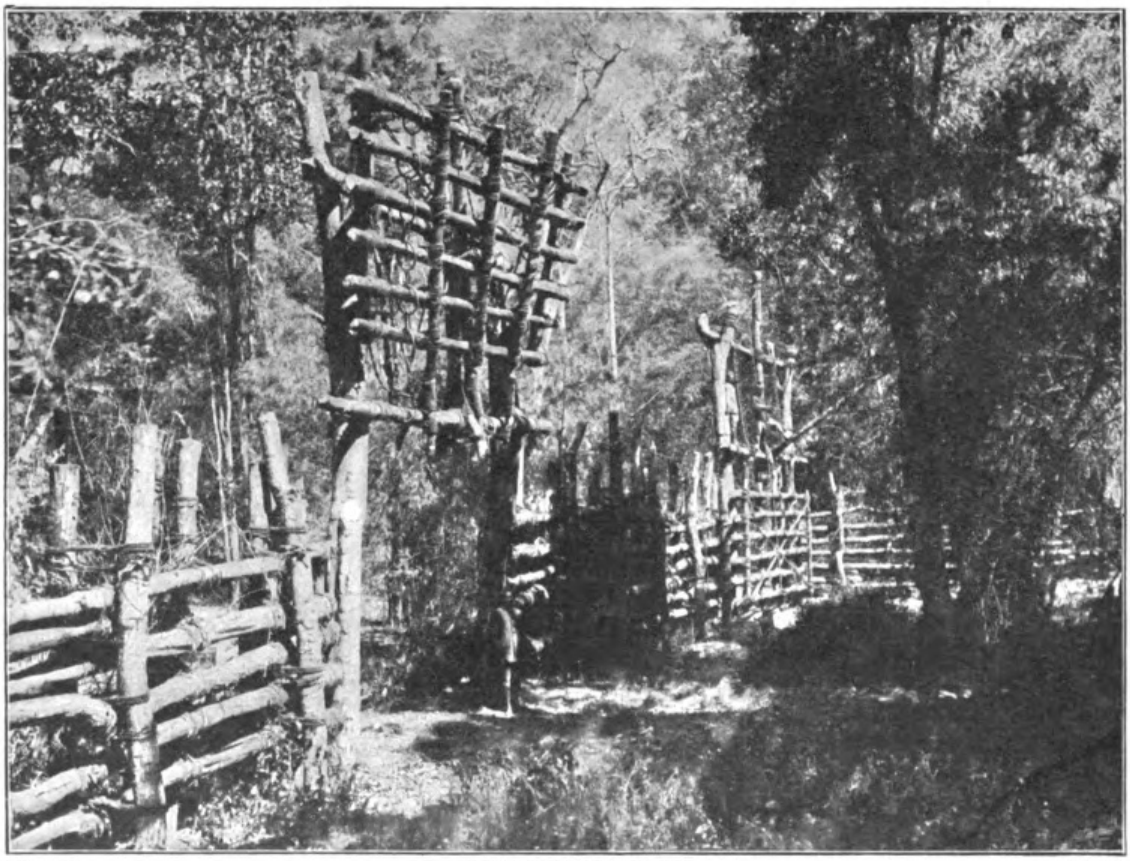
fiascos is clearly shown by my story. In a keddah drive some few years since a huge tusker "broke out" and escaped. Next year the same tusker was with the doomed herd, but now he did not break away. On the contrary, he led his fellows right towards the entrance of the stockade, but then the splendid intelligence of his race flashed out. Sluing right round in the gate entrance so that none could pass, he faced the herd. Urged on by the cries and closing in of the beaters, his companions came up one by one. But he never moved. The gate to which hundreds of beaters had driven their prey could be entered by none. All day he butted away his less sagacious comrades who desired to come into the trap, and at night he led the whole herd in a wild stampede for freedom. Nothing in all the world, not even a battery of heavy guns, could stop the stampede of a score and more elephants when the distance from start to the pale is only a few hundred yards. So the labour of months was wasted and a whole herd went free. Therefore there are now in those jungles three dozen and more of elephants who know the secret of the keddah path. No moral need be drawn.

At certain seasons of the year the elephant herds leave the high hills to feed and find shelter in the lower jungle grounds. Thence by night they raid the village fields, but all day they lie hid in half impenetrable forest. These are the days devoted to their hunting, and for weeks before the necessary preparations have been begun. Now the trackers follow the herds, and while word comes down from time to time of a move here or a shift of ground there, the work at the place chosen for the keddah is pushed to feverish completion. Hundreds of all but naked coolies are digging trenches, building great wattle fences of bamboo, barricading the streams which cross their lines, erecting the great drop-gates, building the inner "tying-up stockades," and setting up the tall crow's-nest look-outs, from which the drive shall be overlooked and the gate ropes cut at the great moment. True, the elephant could shiver the fences and tear down the barricades, but because he is the strongest of all the beasts of the forest he is also the most suspicious. A single thread of wire or a ditch covered over with rafts seems to him uncanny and suggestive of traps. Always, knowing his bulk, he will test the ground on which he is to tread if anything give him the least cause to fear lest it prove unstable. A ditch, then, may not be faced though death be at his heels; a barricade of stakes with chains between must be avoided at any cost.

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Indeed, almost any artificial obstacle will hold him, provided only it be strong enough, for, though he should not fear it, it has only to be higher than he can step across, and it becomes as good as a stone wall. An elephant is incapable of jumping anything, or of moving more than two of his feet off the ground at the same moment.

The great circular enclosure goes right through the jungle, broken only where the drop-gates hang overhead in a screen of greenery and young fronds of the bamboo. At the far end from this entrance the ground



From a] A NATIVE KEDDAH GATE. *[Photo.*

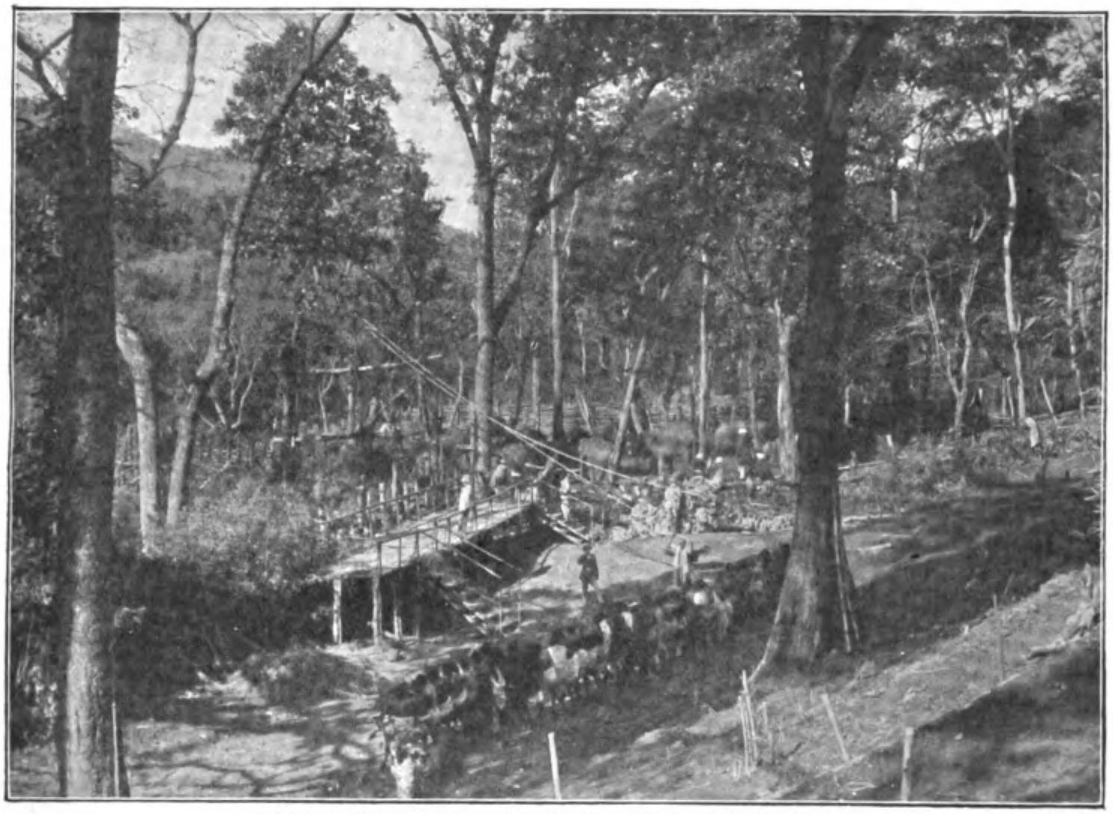
is, however, cleared. Here and there great stumps of trees stand up, and this part is fenced off—a keddah within the keddah, the "tying-up stockade."

Knowing that the jungle has been surrounded for some days by anything up to an odd thousand of beaters whose only direction is to converge on the gate-end of the keddah, let us go back to the herd in the jungle. They have been uneasy for days; why, exactly, it would be hard for them to tell. There was a breath of hidden danger in the free air. Now there is more than a hint, a something surely wrong. So the wise one leading the herd moves off at its shuffle, which looks so lazy and slow, but is indeed fast, and one to endure, if necessary, leagues beyond need of thought. Suddenly there is a very present alarm, for the danger is here indeed.

All round the jungle is lined with human figures; here, maybe, a matchlock sputters out noisy flame, everywhere there are cries and the beating of tom-toms. The great beasts are annoyed, frightened, but dignified, as befits their kingship of the jungle. With only a turn in direction the shuffle continues. Then slowly it appears that the enemy is only on three sides—the fourth is clear! At this, if panic touched their hearts, apparent calm returns. They still move, but now leisurely.

The enemy does not press. By day, if you go too near, he makes much noise; at night he has a circle of fires to fright you; if truth were known, the fire dispels his own fears also. So for days, weeks perhaps, it may be more than a month, the hundreds of the beaters glide inward and the great beasts of the herd retreat before them. Use will sanction all things, and now, if they be not hustled, there is every chance of success to the hunters. Thus the crux comes, and suddenly the wisest of the hunted are aware of a new and silent foe, one who never moves but is there always, green as the

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From a] COOLIES HAULING UP THE GATE OF THE INNER TYING-UP STOCKADE. *[Photo.*

forest itself, built of the daily bamboo, but still a menace. Then the final order to close in is given. The immovable foe is in front, not quite understood, but between its arms is yet the jungle, the undergrowth and the great trees of home. Behind the moving foe is a serried wall of shouting, tom-tom-ing fiends, and the herd flies into the gulf. There is a narrow place where not more than two may walk abreast, and the leaders halt. But beyond, the fence leaps apart as hitherto it has narrowed. On, on, the herd presses from behind, and nervously, well knowing their folly, the leaders pass in. The rout stream in to the last. Then crash—axes have fallen on the sustaining ropes and the great gate plunges down.

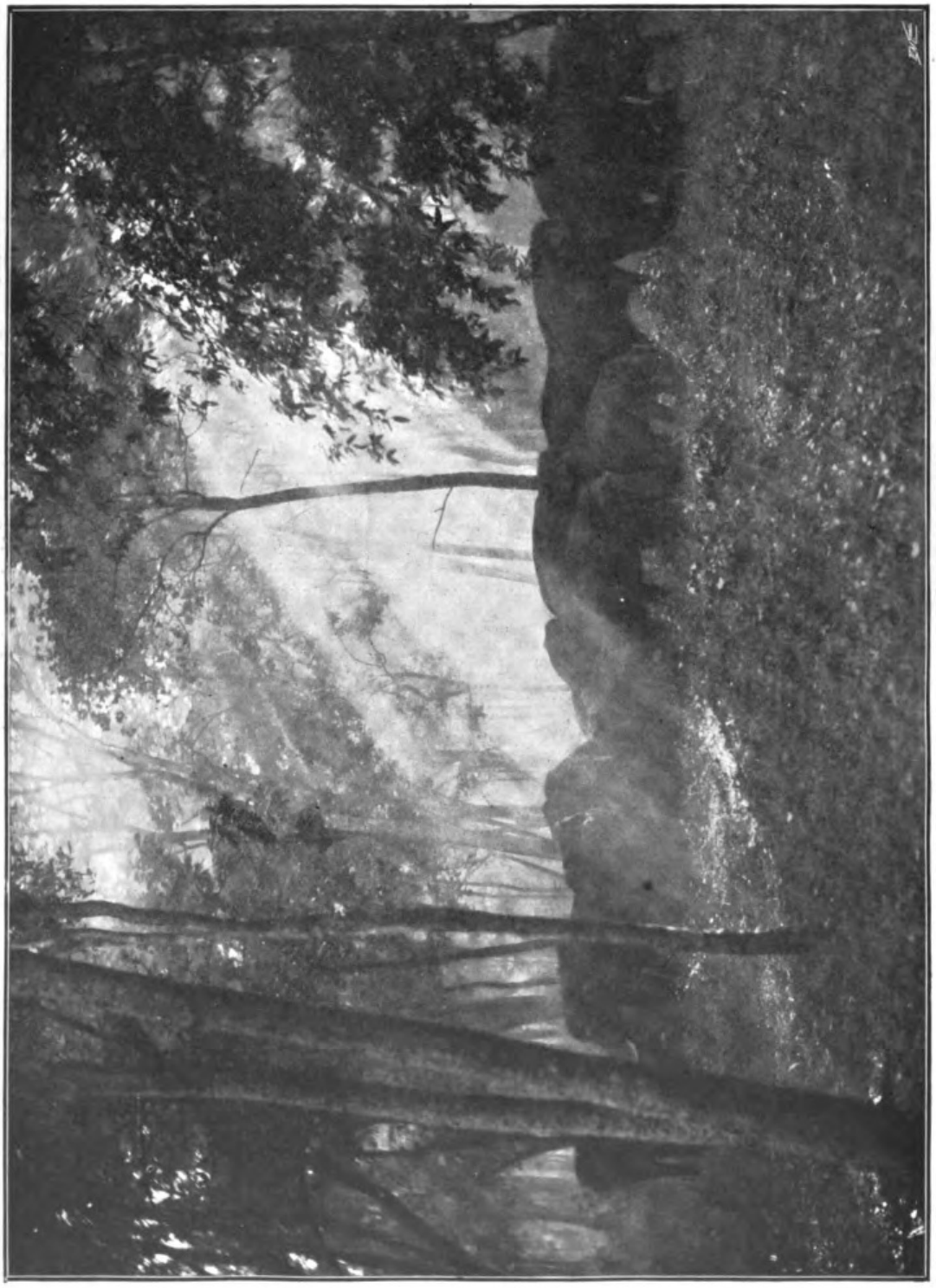
"My lords" are afraid in earnest, but the end has not yet begun. Only the gate has dropped and with it the curtain on Act I.

In Act III. the elephant will go forth—that is, if he has not died of a broken heart—orderly though sullen, a servant of the sircar, and a bond-slave to the will of his mahout. But before that is Act II., always a valley of tribulation, sometimes a tragedy of tragedies.

When the elephant has passed into the keddah, partly beguiled, I should have said, by the enticements of certain traitorous relations long since the servants of their masters' every order, a gate in the tying-up stockade opens, and the tame keddah elephants file in with their riders. Mostly these are females, but with them will be several tuskers, royal fighters and revelling in the fray. The science of man has added yet more to their brute strength, and now, if any of the wild herd is obstreperous, these great beasts will batter him to pitiful submission, granting no mercy except on absolute surrender.

The herd which has been captured may be large or small; say there are now three score or seventy animals impounded, all in a state of more or less alarm. In such a number there will not be above five or six to give violent trouble, and these the trained keddah tuskers have pounded to submission. The most troublesome of all may probably be a cow with a calf. According to her size and boisterousness, two to four tame elephants will "corner" her. On each are a driver and the keddah assistants with their huge ropes. When she is so jammed between the trained animals as to be unable to resist, a great noose will be slipped round her neck and made fast to a forest tree in front. Meanwhile other hunters have slipped down the sterns of their mounts, and have roped her hind legs to the stumps of other trees. Her calf is noosed and dragged off by main force, kicking and squealing, to a similar pillory hard by.

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WHEN MORNING WAKES IN THE JUNGLE—A HERD OF ELEPHANTS AT DAWN.

[Photo. From a]

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Thus the business goes on, until all the herd is left rocking in impotent rage, bound fore and aft, straining and wrestling with the bonds, or glowering in angry despair. It is wild work and not without its risks, this binding of the herd. The ropers, running under their bellies and dodging their heavy tramplings, have need of all their nerve and skill. Sometimes the wisdom of their trained beasts alone saves them, as when a man flies to so gruesome a condition that only careful dressing with soothing ointments will save the sufferer's life. Occasionally one tears away the thick horny pad which is the elephant's foot, and a bullet brings merciful death.

The elephant who yields shows his submission in various ways. The one who covers his head with soil and dead leaves taken up in the trunk is pitifully human in

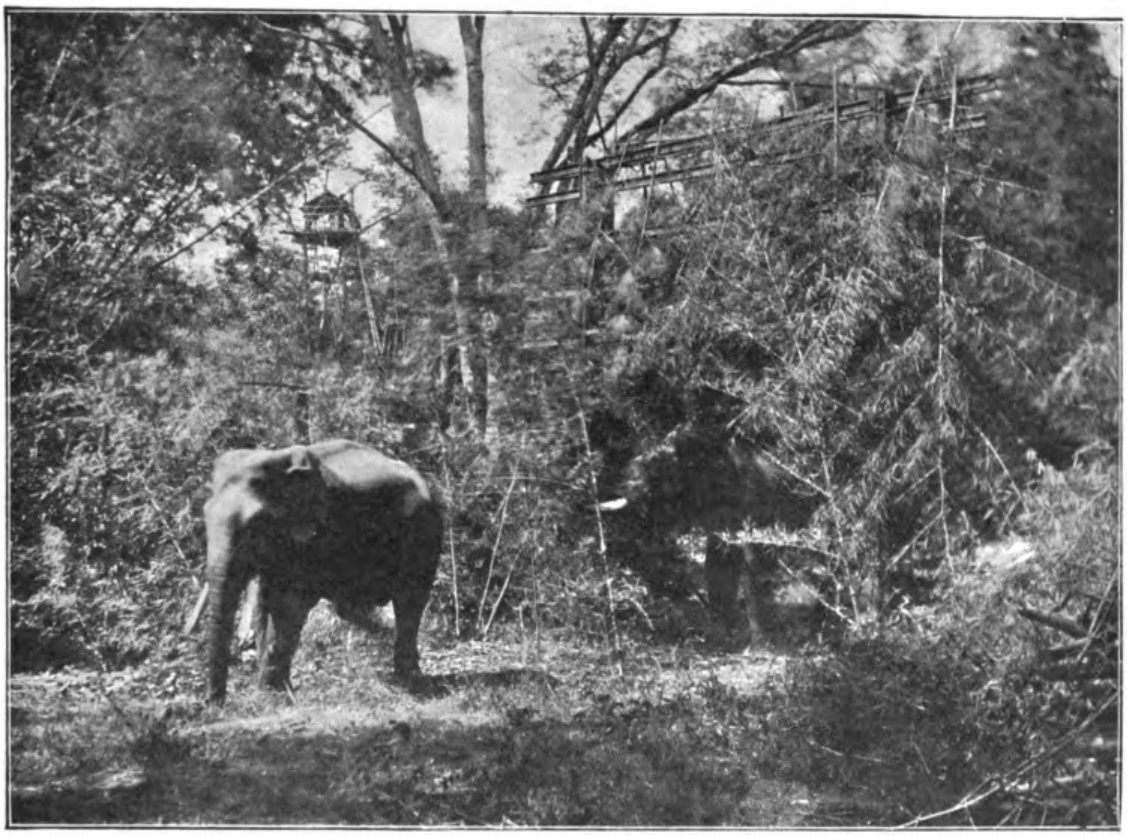


From a] THE VAGUE UNREST. *[Photo.*

flying before the onslaught of an enraged mother is suddenly whisked off his legs in the trunk of a keddah elephant, and finds his safety on the huge beast's neck. For it is a strange trait that in all the turmoil and fury of his despair the wild elephant has never been known to lift a trunk and tear the rider from the back of a tame animal.

Naturally the work of binding all the herd is not complete in one nor yet in two days. When all are shackled and made fast the victims are left till exhaustion consequent on impotent rage, endless struggles, and temporary starvation reduce them to the calm of surrender. Yet it is not every one which will thus give way. Some will die of pure heart-break for very shame of their capture. Others chafe their huge legs into terrible sores, which are irritated with the sand and the appeal of his misery. At this period great heaps of fodder—perhaps their dearest luxury, green sugar-cane—are piled before the great beasts, whose appetites are never proof against the bribe. In his natural state the elephant's existence may be described as one long meal, and even if freshly tethered he will interrupt his frantic struggles for a mouthful, after which he at once returns to the interrupted effort to be free. For a member of his race to refuse food is an almost infallible sign of serious illness. As soon as the last individual of a herd has been tethered two men are allotted to care for and to tame him. In a very few days the victim allows himself to be handled, a girth of rope is passed round his middle, and his future driver climbs upon his back and head. Finally tethered to tame elephants before

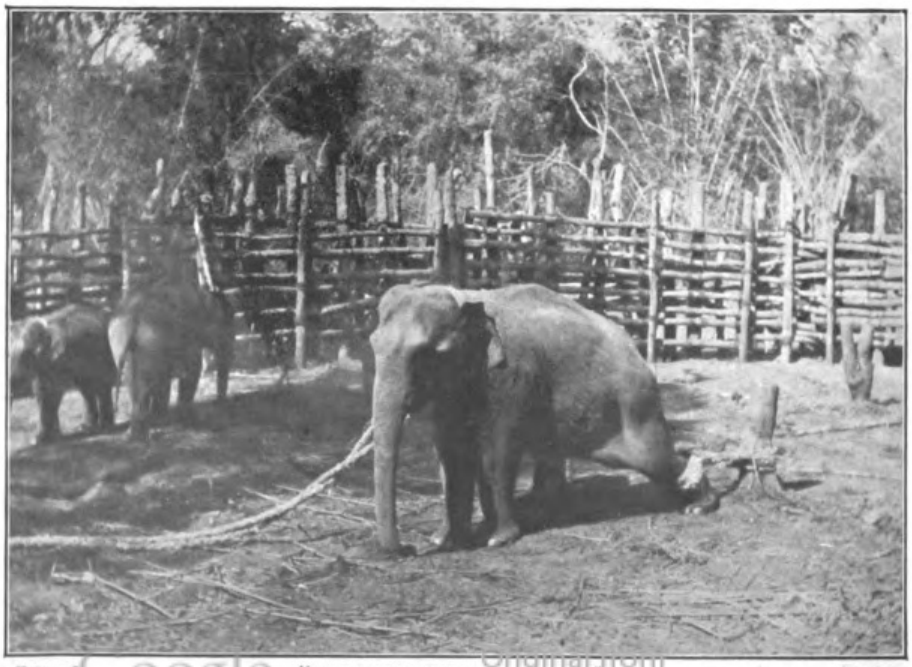
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ELEPHANTS PASSING INTO THE KEDDAH UNDER SANDERSON'S IRON DROP-GATE, WHICH HAS BEEN SCREENED WITH BAMBOO FRONDS.
From a] *[Photo.*

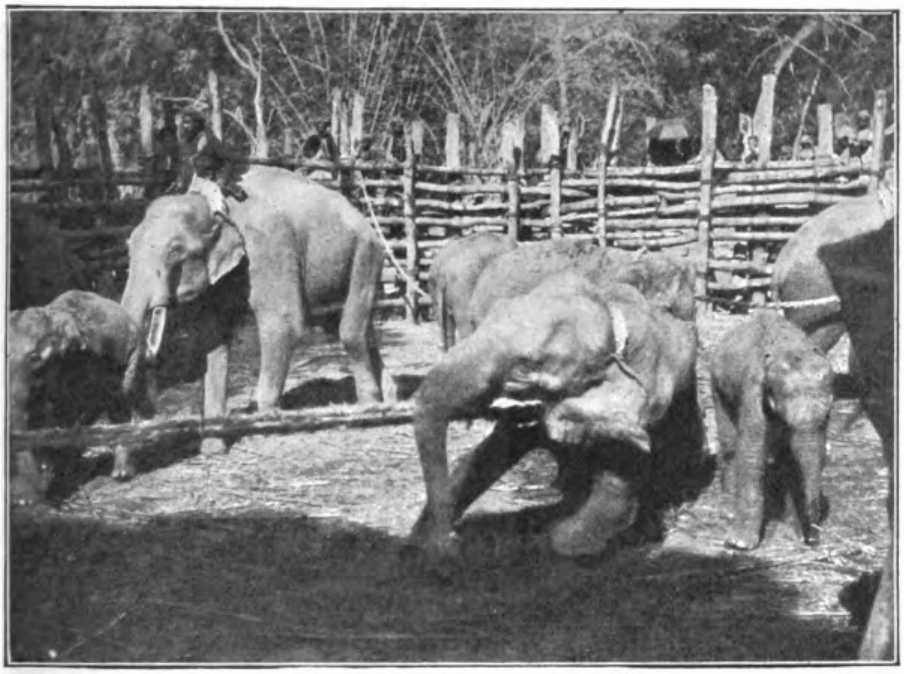
and behind, or, if still obstreperous, flanked on each side as well, the captives are drafted out of the keddah and hobbled in "the lines," where, side by side with the trained animals, they await further training. One of the first acts in this is perhaps the greatest conscious luxury in an elephant's whole life. Were he wild it would be the act of every evening, but now he has not been near water for weeks. In the natural state he has his daily bath, and it is this which is now restored to him, despite the ropes which still bind him before and behind. Up and down goes his trunk, and the water sluices back and sides till he stands there knee-deep in the river, no more the dun-coloured animal of the dust and turmoil of the keddahs, but a huge, shining blackness.

Two or three months after their capture the elephants march out in long lines, roped still, but each with his own mahout astride



From a] "I WILL TRY ME THESE BONDS." *[Photo.*

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From a] "SHALL ONE BIND ME WITH ROPES?" *[Photo.*

his neck. From the line as they go some are turned off here to the stud of a neighbouring Rajah, there some are sold at auction. Finally, the remnant comes to the railway, and special trucks scatter them all over the Presidencies.

The value of a newly-tamed elephant varies from £80 to £2,000. Only the most magnificent beasts will fetch anything like the latter figure, which is based on the Oriental's love of display. Such an elephant is destined for the State procession of one of the great Rajahs. In one of his earliest keddahs Sanderson records a capture of sixteen bulls, thirty cows, three tuskless bulls, and nineteen calves. Of these nine of the youngest died and one cow grew unmanageable in the keddah and was shot. The cost of the operations was £1,556, and a complete sale at market prices would have totalled to over £6,500. Nowadays, mainly for reasons stated before, the captures are seldom so large. Moreover, many attempts prove quite abortive. Thus, although the price of elephants has risen greatly, the keddah establishment of the Government of India is glad to pay its way and little more. Nevertheless the captured animal breeds freely, and the wild herds are said to be regularly increasing. It may therefore be hoped that this battle of the giants will continue for many years to come.



"KISMET!" *[Photo.*

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The Lovable Miss Lingfield.

By Winifred Graham.

I.

DORKING HALL was a delightful place to stay at. So thought Alice Lingfield, who dearly loved her friends, the Sutcliffes, while she revelled in the beauty of the quaint old house and its extensive grounds.

The surrounding hills, the unlimited green of trees and pastures, making such a restful landscape to charm the eye, appealed forcibly to this town girl, whose soul delighted in simple joys, rural freedom, and the poetry of country scenes.

Alice Lingfield seemed to attract affection to an almost embarrassing degree; there was a brightness and fascination apart from her beauty which proved wholly irresistible.

She had high spirits, she was popular, but, oh! how tender and loving she could be with children! The little brood of fair-haired girls at Dorking Hall simply worshipped the ground she trod on.

They followed her about, they gathered round her knee, ever grouping themselves in her wake like bridesmaids to a white-robed bride.

Penelope, the eldest, a warm-hearted child of eight years old, who, the previous winter, had been heard to call herself "a hunting woman," was Alice Lingfield's special friend and admirer. The four smaller girls, ranging to a person aged three, toddled persistently after the lovable guest, receiving so much favour and encouragement that their fidelity could scarcely prove a matter of surprise.

But to one heart alone these baby creatures brought bitterness and sorrow.

Robert Macalister, commonly known as "Bob," found in those tiny tyrants enemies to his peace of mind.

At Dorking Hall he had relied upon golden opportunities. In London, of course, his divinity was, naturally enough, surrounded by tiresome bees who hummed about the fairest flower of the season, basking in the honeyed sweetness of her frank, girlish smiles.

The country at least should prove different, Bob had told himself when he joyfully accepted Mrs. Sutcliffe's invitation to Dorking Hall. Now he found that children were even more difficult to deal with than the hated rivals of ball-rooms. Penelope, slim, fairylike, and sensitive, could not possibly be snubbed—Bob's good nature would have revolted at the mere thought; while the bonny, picturesque little damsels, Hazel, Molly, Dolly, and Diana, made a quartette which overwhelmed even the strategy of a desperate, though shy, lover.

The days at Dorking Hall were numbered; innumerable engagements would call Alice back to the gay town, and he would be no nearer—no nearer. The bright tone of the country grew clouded; Bob's laughter had a forced note.

Alice never found the children in the way. The sight of them, the touch of their little hands, and the music of their merry voices were a perpetual joy to her eyes, her ears, her senses.

Even Bob, resentful as he felt, saw a certain wonder in it as he came upon Alice seated on a mossy bank surrounded by her court.

"By Jove, they make a pretty picture!" he said to himself, pausing unperceived by an old stone image.

Alice, in her simple white dress, looked the very incarnation of young mother Spring, with tender shoots at her feet and in her arms.

There was a somewhat pensive expression in her eyes as they rested on the small flock of sunny-faced children. Dolly and Molly sprawled on the grass, a pair of chubby, freckled twins, with exquisite dimples and fat flaxen curls. Diana, the baby, nestled close to her, crumpling a daisy-chain which Hazel had been at great pains to make, while Penelope, standing erect, outshone her sisters in grace and beauty as a brilliant comet dwarfs the lesser stars.

Penelope was speaking in her musical voice; she had no idea that she was pretty, much less that her words bore all the mellow softness of a sweet-toned bell.

"You see," she said, "it's very awkward

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"'BY JOVE, THEY MAKE A PRETTY PICTURE!' HE SAID."

for those poor children in London who have no clothes to wear, and never get anything to eat, about taking holidays in the country. They want a lot of money for trains, and carriages, and buns. I am going to try and help them; that is why I have a collecting card."

"A very good idea," answered Alice. The conversation ceased as Bob's shadow fell across the path. He threw himself down at Alice's side, and began plucking at the grass in a nervous, irritable manner.

To be so near—and yet so far away—within reach of her hand, but beyond the range of her keen sympathy, which settled in a great flood of loving warmth on the children at her knee, was more than flesh and blood could stand.

"Don't they make you hot?" he said, as Hazel — lucky infant — dragged down Alice's pretty face and kissed her soft pink cheek.

"Oh! no," she laughed, rearing her graceful neck in its cool open collar of soft transparent lace; "it is my last day but one with these ducks of things, and I can't spare a minute of them! I shall miss the country terribly, but I shall miss the children more. Time enough to think of the heat when I am back in London."

There was just the suspicion of a mischievous twinkle in Alice's eyes, which made her seem like a child herself for the moment. Bob only noticed the air of wonderful refinement and the perfect profile of this woman who held his heart.

"You know," he continued, "it's the Derby to-morrow. Mrs. Sutcliffe suggested that you and I should ride up to Epsom Downs and get a bird's-eye view of the race."

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"Delightful!" said Alice; "I should like nothing better. Penelope and I planned to go the evening I arrived; you've been counting the days to it, haven't you, Pen?"

Bob's face fell. He ground his teeth with vexation. Far away on those heights he had resolved to tell her the truth, but again she carelessly tossed the golden ball of opportunity far above his reach.

"Isn't it a bit rough for Penelope?" he said, ruthlessly, casting a sidelong glance at the child, and feeling a twinge of conscience as he caught her expression of eager anticipation.

Penelope answered the question quickly, with a little gasp.

"I rode there last year on Billy, and he was quite, quite good!" she persisted, flushing to her temples at the mere idea of being left behind.

She had talked of this ride day after day to Alice, and dreamt at night of the wonderful race, the deafening cheers, the fluttering colours of the jockeys, the straining horses, the long green course. Surely, on Alice Lingfield's last day, the cup of happiness must sparkle to its very brim! Penelope felt a little shudder run through her at the thought of possible disappointment.

Bob subsided and allowed his shoe-laces to be persistently untied and knotted by the twins, who found a strong fascination in shoe-gear, both when worn on the feet of guests or reposing under dressing-tables.

He longed to know what was passing in Alice's mind. Was she thinking of him as she sat with her imperious little chin resting on her disengaged hand? The other lay in Hazel's possession, who, it seemed to Bob, purposely tormented him by her unchecked blandishments.

He was envious and, therefore, bad-tempered. In reality her thoughts, as he half suspected, were with the little ones. The attitudes of delicious abandon so characteristic of childhood appealed to her artistic eye, and the freshness of these young lives brought a maternal thrill to the girl's soul, which she only faintly understood.

If love were very near her at that moment, love of a deep and passionate nature, she was aware only of the tender flow of childish affection, which fanned her spirit like a cool breeze on a summer's day.

But Bob sat plotting, with one eye on Penelope.

"It's merely a case for a bribe," he thought, and lightly jingled the coins in his pocket as an accompaniment to this soothing idea.

II.

"I DO hope it will be fine to-morrow!" said Penelope, as she looked out of the window last thing before going to bed, smiling up at the clear sky and bright stars. "You know," she continued, "it's the best day of the whole year; there are other races, but the Derby will be far the nicest, because I shall ride to see it with Miss Lingfield!"

She lay awake a long while thinking of Alice and her sweet ways, wondering if in the whole world there could be anyone else so beautiful and delightful, excepting, of course, Penelope's own mother, who, in a way, was a little bit like Miss Lingfield.

At dawn the child crept out of bed, and laughed with glee to see the sun rising with a promise of bright things to come.

Very early, before Hazel, Molly, Dolly, and Diana thought of opening an eyelid, Penelope scampered into her clothes and ran off to the garden. She felt like the lark, full of song, as she skipped over the dewy grass and trilled forth a cheery good-morning to the flowers.

Someone else was restless too, and had come out early to breathe the air—someone who, like Penelope, gazed at the stars before going to bed and thought of Alice Lingfield.

"Halloa!" said a man's voice. "This is lucky. I wanted to see you."

"Good-morning, Mr. Macalister," replied Penelope, holding out a small hand.

She hardly knew why, but something in his tone filled her with a certain misgiving.

"I wanted to see you!" Why should he want to see her, unless, unless——

The words recurred to her mind suddenly: "Isn't it a bit rough for Penelope?"

"We have a lovely day for our ride!" she stammered, turning her flushed little face up to the sky.

"Yes," he replied, "it's about the ride I've been thinking. I want you not to come, and—and I'll give you this if you will just say you don't care to go with us."

He held out a very large, imposing coin, upon which Penelope fixed her eyes with an expression of horror.

"How much is it?" she asked, in a strangled tone.

"Five shillings," he replied. "You can buy yourself a beautiful doll with that."

A long, painful pause—the child turned strangely pale—a struggle seemed going on in her mind, for her lips twitched and her hands clenched convulsively.

The man and the small girl faced each other, a certain breathless anxiety in their

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"A STRUGGLE SEEMED GOING ON IN HER MIND."

attitudes. It meant much to both, the issue of this bargain.

"How many pennies are there in five shillings?" she asked at last, feeling in the pocket of her short cotton frock for a card, which she carried always now, in the hope of collecting stray pence for the poor children in need of country air. Each space, ticked off, represented a penny. She regarded the card with tear-dimmed eyes.

"Sixty," he replied, not noticing her emotion.

"Sixty!" She repeated the word with a gasp. It sealed her fate—like a dark door closing with a bang upon the looked-for hours of pleasure. Only the sacrifice of her own amusement, and those unhappy little mortals in the densely crowded cities would some of them be the better for a few hours' sunshine. The bright beams playing on the flowers seemed defying her to refuse the proffered coin, while the very rays reflected their sparkle on the silver bribe! Yet Penelope stood paralyzed, and her clenched hand still hung against her side.

"It is Alice Lingfield's last day," sang the birds. "To-morrow she will be gone."

But Penelope turned a deaf ear to these subtle twitterings, nor would she allow herself to listen to the call of the hills.

With an effort she thrust from her mind the thought of that vast multitude on the usually silent downs. The swaying swings and rollicking merry-go-rounds viewed in the distance, the seething mass of mysterious humanity, held for the child unlimited enchantment. The wonder of it fired her imagination and produced intense excitement.

She had described the scene to Alice in stirring words, firmly convinced that the sight would be as novel to Miss Lingfield as to herself.

Penelope did not try to analyze his reasons for not wanting her, the petrifying fact was enough in itself, and then the heavy piece of money must be fairly gained.

She moved a step nearer and let her trembling little fingers close over the five-shilling piece.

"I don't want a doll," she said, "but I—I—shall use it for something else."

As she spoke she quickly concealed the card, for fear he might guess the generous motives hidden behind her half-whispered words.

That "something else" meant sacrifice, denial, and the glorious light which can shine in the innocent eyes of a child may bring a certain matured nobility to the youngest features. Robert Macalister sighed with relief—a smile broke over his face. He strolled away and began to whistle. Penelope walked slowly, very slowly, back to the house, biting her lips.

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III.

NOBODY knew what was the matter with the child, for Penelope did not want to go out riding—she appeared listless, weary, crushed. Alice felt quite worried about her as she rode away, since the little figure stood watching her go with such a pitiful droop of the shoulders and an expression as of quiet resignation to fate.

Penelope even forgot to play with Hazel, Molly, Dolly, and Diana, who found the ruling spirit missing from their games.

"Miss Lingfield will think I did not care to go with her—that is the worst part of all," Penelope told herself, as she roamed about the garden. "I could bear any disappointment if only it had not hurt her. She looked back three times as she rode away with Mr. Macalister, and at each look I felt I must run and say why I was staying behind."

Penelope paused by the mossy bank where only yesterday they had discussed the ride. Now it looked strangely lonely without Alice's bright figure.

The child, with a pang that cut deeply into her sensitive soul, stood silently trying for the first time to reason out the man's motive for his odd, inexplicable action.

Her troubled reverie was broken by light footsteps. Mrs. Sutcliffe had come in search of her little daughter.

"Penelope," she said, drawing the slight figure to her side, "you have never had a secret from me. Tell me, darling, what is on your mind? Do you imagine I can't see that you have been crying?"

Gradually, with gentle words, Mrs. Sutcliffe drew the whole story from the child. As she listened an expression of great amusement crept over her face.

"Mother, why are you laughing? I suppose you are glad about the sixty spaces being filled up on my card. You want the poor children to be happy. If I thought Miss Lingfield wasn't hurt and vexed I should laugh, too. When the horses came round she shook her head at me and called me a 'deserter.' She thinks I don't love her any more. That was why I cried directly they were out of sight."

"You can't understand, little woman," said Mrs. Sutcliffe; "but your heart is in the right place. And you need not worry about Alice. You children have monopolized her terribly, all five of you, for the last few days, and, of course, you could not be expected to see that someone else loved her too and was greedy enough to want her all to himself. If you were older you would know this naughty mother of yours has been a very cunning matchmaker."

Mrs. Sutcliffe laughed again, imparting her merriment to Penelope, who, still not quite understanding, felt suddenly reconciled and happy.

The younger children, patrolling the grounds, joined their mother on the sunny bank, their favourite spot, and looking at them Mrs. Sutcliffe realized how great a part these innocents had played in Alice's romance.

That Alice Lingfield and Bob Macalister were positively made for each other Mrs. Sutcliffe had decided from the very first, but Bob needed spurring to action by despair. Adown an easy path his feet might long have dawdled in the rosy byways of flirtation.

Thus she had watched with joy the girl's pre-occupation in the children's society.

"He won't be able to stand it much longer," Mrs. Sutcliffe had thought day by day; "sooner or later he must wrest her from them by force!"

Penelope hardly knew why, but she awaited Alice's return with a sensation of suppressed excitement. Her mother's words had set her thinking. Was Mr. Macalister, perhaps, the someone else who loved Miss Lingfield too?

Across the hills, down to the valley came soft breezes, whispering their tender story of love abroad, light-footed and airy. Mrs. Sutcliffe felt the very day breathed rapture, as she pictured the riders side by side under the clear sky.

At last came the sound of horses' hoofs in the drive, and as Alice alighted, her cheeks glowing, her eyes sparkling, her lips parted, she unconsciously told the glorious news of her freshly discovered love. One glance at Bob's face confirmed the revelation, and Mrs. Sutcliffe knew their visit to Dorking Hall had been crowned with success.

"We have had such a lovely ride!" said Alice, as Penelope flew into her arms with the air of knowing and understanding far more than she was supposed to know or understand. It had been a day of awakening, a day of surprise; all the clouds were drifting away under Alice's sunny radiance, her happy, sparkling mood.

The twins struggled each to wrest from the other her riding-whip, the stronger of the two hugging it close to her baby heart, simply because it was Alice's, and therefore deserving of love. Hazel and Diana were in her train and Penelope hung on her arm adoringly.

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Once more the children gathered close, drawn by the mute affection they could not express in words. Like a blooming rose surrounded by fair buds she stood amongst the little ones, and Bob no longer grudged them her smiles.

When Alice was dressing for dinner that night Penelope crept to her room and hovered at her side, watching her as she arranged the long coils of hair which crowned her daintily-shaped head.

"I have brought you a bunch of white azalea," said the child, "to put in your sash, because mother says you will soon be a bride. I once went to a wedding, and the bride smiled at all the people, and afterwards we dressed up with mother's lace shawl over our heads and pretended we were being married too. Are you glad Mr. Macalister loves you?"

Penelope put the question quickly, a note of sudden anxiety shaking her voice.

Alice laid down the silver glass in which she had been examining her neatly coiffured head. She turned a pair of liquid eyes on the little figure and caught Penelope to her heart.

"Glad!" she whispered. "Oh! Pen, I'm so glad—I can't tell you—and, dearest, it's all your doing! You must have guessed he loved me, for you made it easy, you gave me my happiness, you best of fairy schemers!"

"I didn't guess—I did it for the poor children," gasped Penelope, not offering to explain her enigmatical words. "But wasn't it lucky it made you happy too? I feel just as if my heart would burst—it thumps and thumps!"

She pressed her little hands together, pausing for breath.

"A bride!" she repeated, dwelling on the words. "We must all of us play at weddings to-morrow!"



"ARE YOU GLAD MR. MACALISTER LOVES YOU?"

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The Craze for Panama Hats.



THE VILLAGE OF TOLIMA, COLOMBIA, FROM WHENCE COME THE FINEST PANAMA HATS.
From a Photo. by Vander Weyde, New York.

ONE HUNDRED POUNDS for a straw hat! Enough with which to take a three months' holiday, enough to keep your son a year at college, enough to buy a small farm. And yet so astute a financier as Mr. Lyman Gage, ex-Secretary of the U.S. Treasury, recently paid that sum for an extra-fine Panama hat, and reckoned, moreover, that he had made a good bargain. King Edward VII. also is reported to have paid a Bond Street hatter £90 to secure "the best Panama in London"; while Jean de Reszke, the noted tenor, has paid the topmost price—something under £120—to procure a similar object in America. Ex-Mayor Van Wyck, of New York, is chuckling over his success in securing a Panama which dealers have told him is superior in quality to either King Edward's or the one owned by Jean de Reszke. He paid only £50.

These instances of extravagance are not mentioned as a reflection upon the perpetrators, but merely to illustrate the extent of "the Panama hat craze," one of the most expensive fashions ever adopted by men. Expensive, because a Panama of even medium quality cannot be had for less than £5, and if you aim at having one that may be tucked away in a vest pocket like a lead pencil, or slipped through a finger-ring, the price is, to most persons, prohibitive. In spite of this costliness, however, Panama hats are being dispatched from South America absolutely in ship-loads, and about half the population of Ecuador are engaged in supplying hat luxuries for the men of Europe and America.

The craze began last year, and appeared to be only transient; but enterprising merchants foretold that this summer would find a demand far greater than the supply, and they accordingly put in their orders about six months ago. Since then the Panama hat industry has become more lucrative than any other in that part of South America adjoining the Isthmus, and with the prospect of making a fortune in a few years many planters have abandoned the raising of coffee and rice. The mountain passes of the Andes, from Chimborazo northward, are crowded, day and night, with long columns of pack-mules and ox-carts bearing their precious burden to Panama, which is the clearing-house for hats. The streets of Panama itself are flanked with the establishments of hat-brokers, and half the city is engaged, one way or other, in helping to further this American "craze."

In all the pages of history you will, perhaps, find no account of a fad that was at the same time so costly as this one and yet so generally adopted, not even when plumed knights and velvet-clothed courtiers trod the

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earth. In their heyday a considerable sum of money was, no doubt, paid for the picturesque "Gainsborough," expensively decorated, which was affected by the men of that period; but it is safe to say that not even the extravagant Louis XIV. paid for his head-dress the price of the best Panama.

In our time it has been almost the exclusive privilege of women to spend large sums of money on hats, and it is not uncommon to hear of a Parisian "creation" selling for a thousand dollars. With the fashion, nowadays, of occasionally wearing diamonds or other precious gems on a head-dress, there is practically no limit to the depth that a woman might plunge in indulging in this luxury. The fad of wearing real lace that is affected to-day is also a costly one. A smartly-dressed woman whose ambition is to be in the swim of society will often wear two or three yards of Irish point-lace that costs, perhaps, £80 a yard. It is this sort of thing that gives a father or a husband heart-disease, a tragedy that has been so useful to joke-writers and knock-about comedians.

But the tables are now reversed, and humorists to be up-to-date must regild one of their stock commodities. It is the women now who gasp with astonishment when the head of the house comes home with a little wisp of straw which he cheerfully proclaims has cost him something like a hundred pounds. Not only that, but he has the effrontery to boast of the purchase and goes strutting about because Brown or Jones has a Panama hat that is woven in two pieces while his, proud man, has never a seam!

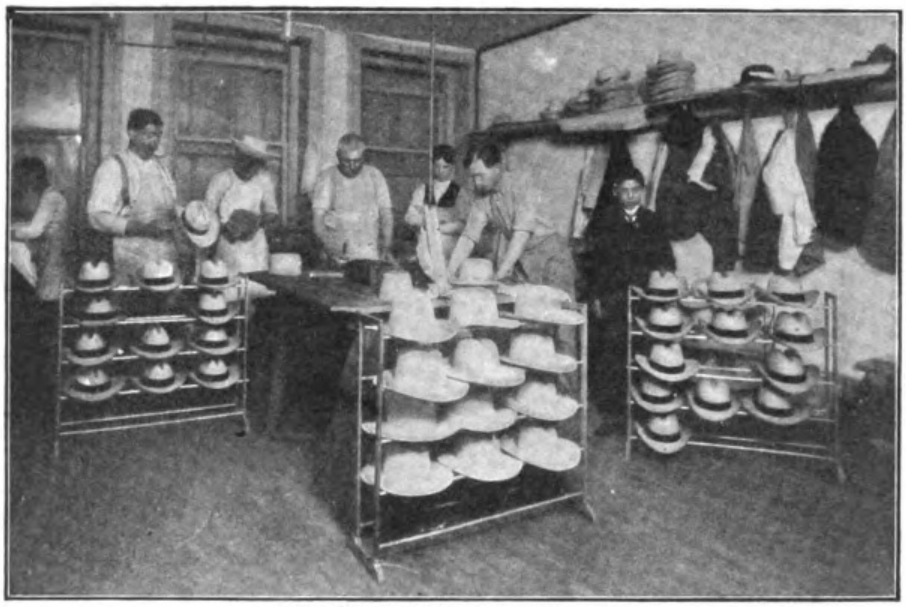
At first sight the Panama hat "craze" would appear to be a lavish folly taken up because of a wild desire to "be in style." But there are good causes for the Panama's popularity, the chief one being that the common straw hat, with its stiff brim, so universally worn in this country and abroad, is a fragile affair, breaks easily, and has little to recommend it excepting lightness of weight; while a good Panama may be worn a lifetime, can be blocked to any shape, and is exceedingly comfortable to the head. It is, in short, a summer luxury, and only its costliness has prevented it from being universally worn.



TOLIMA NATIVES WEAVING PANAMA HATS.
From a Photo. by Vander Weyde, New York.

Among the false notions regarding Panama

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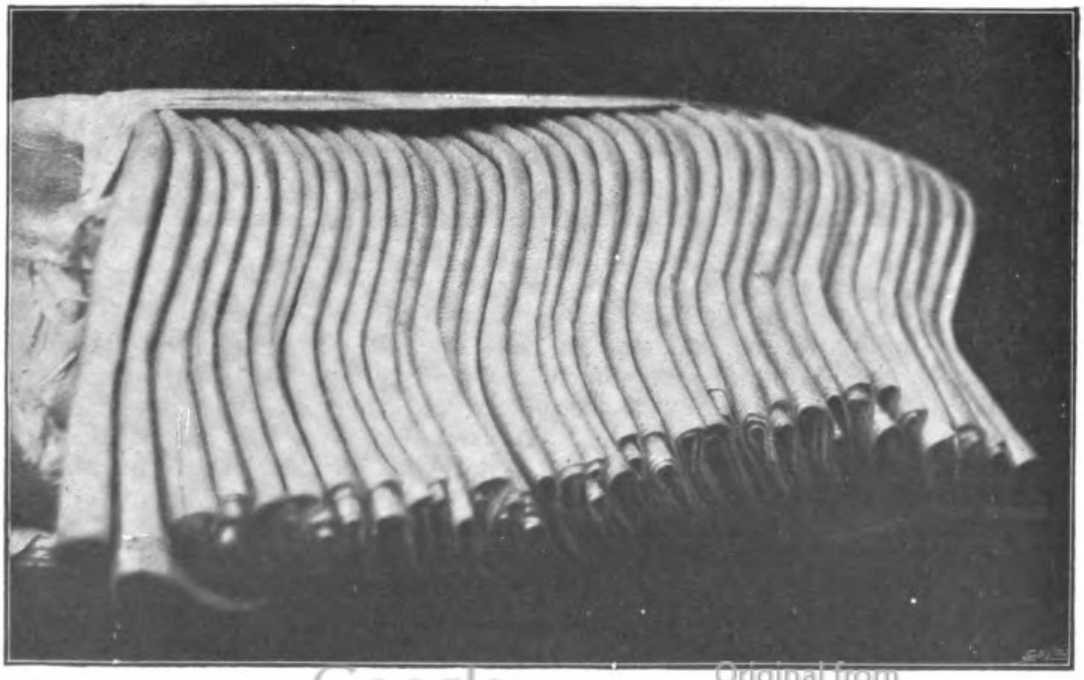


FINISHING THE HATS IN THE FACTORY.
From a Photo. by Vander Weyde, New York.

hats—and there are prevalent a great many—is that of its origin. The name, in the first place, would lead one to believe that the fabric is manufactured in Panama, whereas the fact is that Ecuador, Colombia, and Guayaquil produce two-thirds of all the Panamas in the market. The city of Panama is merely a shipping port for these hats, which are brought from other places. It is the metropolis of the northern part of South America. The name was originally coined by some French merchants who bought straw hats in the village of Monte Cristo, Ecuador, and took them back to Paris. They attracted attention on the boulevards there, and when queried about them the Frenchmen curtly replied, "Chapeaux de Panama."

Another illusion that prevails generally is that the natives weave these precious hats under water, but the photographs shown here conclusively disprove that. The rumour probably started from the method of soaking the raw material in water prior to their being woven. There is nothing extraordinary about this, the object being merely to soften the "straw," so that it will be pliable and easy to handle.

To call the Panama a straw hat is, by the way, an anomaly, for it is not made of straw at all, the material used in its manufacture being either the stem of palm leaves or a rare sort of grass that grows in South America. The natives are very deft in



A BALE OF PANAMA HATS.
From a Photo. by Vander Weyde, New York.

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curing and weaving both these products. The palm they tear in shreds with their teeth until it spreads out fan-shape. After a long soaking the palm stem is taken out of the water and nailed on a rough-looking block, at which the workman sits for weeks at a time, carefully putting in place shred after shred.

It is this length of time and tediousness in labour that account for the high price placed on Panama hats. An idea of the real situation in Panama may be had from the following letter received by S. M. Jackson and Co., of New York, from their South American agent: "Replying to your valued inquiry of April 25th," said this correspondent, "regarding which we have had to make inquiries, we find that the 'finest' hat required by you would necessitate four months to manufacture, and would cost between 80dols. and 100dols. in gold" (£16 to £20). When a hat costs 100dols. in its unfinished condition at the place of manufacture it is not to be wondered at that the same hat, after going through the American Customs house, where a 35 per cent. duty is exacted, should retail at 500dols., or £100.

There is one distinction in Panamas of the utmost importance, a distinction which, if noticed, stamps the wearer as a possessor of the real thing, or, on the other hand, a pretender. Your genuine, high-priced Panama is made in one piece and has no lining, while the inferior style of hat, made for the most part in Antioquia, Colombia, is woven in two pieces and has a lining. The latter is regarded with contempt by the South Americans, though they often pass in the United States for the "real thing" and are priced accordingly.

The perfect Panamas are woven by the women of Ecuador, and those that live in the two provinces of Tolima and Suarez, Colombia. The men can rarely be induced to work, no matter how considerable the pay, and contractors have about ceased trying to galvanize them with energy. But the women are more industrious, and plod along week after week tearing the palm leaf with certain nicety and then weaving in the shreds, one hat at a time.

The value of a hat depends entirely upon its texture and pliability. One that costs £100, for example, should be so closely woven as to appear practically smooth to the naked eye. It is, of course, made in one piece, and if the owner has not been cheated he should be able to squeeze his hat through a finger-ring. But a hat capable of this treatment is about as rare as a blue diamond.

There is no telling where the Panama hat "craze" will end, or the amount of money that has been spent thereon this season. The masculine population seem to have gone quite mad over it, and dealers are taking advantage of the moment to reap a harvest, especially in America. "In other years," said a Broadway hatter, "I would have sold several thousand stiff-brim Mackinaws in the first part of the season, but this season I have sold less than a hundred. Only Panamas are wanted. Women, too, have caught the infection, and you will find that before the summer is half over fashion will decree that to be up-to-date a woman must own a Panama."



"ONE-PIECE" PANAMA HAT OF THE FINEST QUALITY.
From a Photo. by Vander Weyde, New York.

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Some After-Dinner Speakers.

WRITTEN AND ILLUSTRATED BY HARRY FURNISS.

IN everything variety is charming, but, alas! we have many charming speeches and far too little variety. It is too much the habit to select the same speakers time after time; a man makes one good speech, and he is on the strength of it asked to make fifty. In all probability he repeats himself, particularly if he poses as a humorist; this performance becomes mechanical, the trick consists in saying the same thing in different ways. Earl Granville, giving some advice to a friend, who has since won the reputation of a very great speaker, said to him: "There is nothing so tiresome as the constant reappearance of the same man and the constant repetition of the same voice. Out of your toasts select one for a speech, and into that speech pour all the information, all the argument, all the eloquence, all the wit, all the pathos you can possibly scrape together, and for God's sake don't make neat and appropriate speeches between every other toast. Dismiss them with a sentence. If there is a point in that sentence, so much the better; but if not, let it be one sentence without a point."



LORD RATHMORE.

If the late Earl gave this advice to his own countryman, what would he have thought of those irrepressible after-dinner speakers, the Americans, who "orate" on every possible occasion? As regards their after-dinner speaking, I would prefer to give the opinion of one of the greatest men in England than give my own. This opinion, from no less a person than Mr. Joseph Chamberlain, was given in the presence of Mr. Chauncey Depew, Sir Henry Irving, and others well able to discuss the point: it was that Americans are not better after-dinner speakers than the English.

I think myself that the average American can speak better than the average Englishman, but I have heard much better speaking on special occasions in England than I have heard in similar conditions in America, and I have had ample opportunity of making the contrast.

Take haphazard a room full of Americans and a room full of Englishmen, and you will find nearly every American will say something and say it well; but, on the other hand, few Englishmen can speak well. That is not the point. I am referring to set after-dinner speaking, and there is no doubt as to the superiority of the English over the Americans.

The best after-dinner speaking I ever heard was at a dinner where half-a-dozen speakers — all English — made far more eloquent and more witty speeches than I have ever heard at half-a-dozen American show banquets. At the one I have in mind Lord Rathmore was at his best. Sir Frank Lockwood, Sir Edward Clarke, Mr. Pinero, and Lord Russell excelled themselves. All the speakers confined themselves to their subject. Now this the Americans seldom do, as I have just pointed out. They give a string of anecdotes, good, bad, and indifferent, and wind up with an eloquent peroration in flamboyant style. There is decidedly too much playing to the gallery and too little "playing the game," as we would say, in

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order to drag in a story. The best friends of the speaker are bowled over without the least compunction. This is not playing cricket, but it is what I have witnessed Chauncey Depew and all American show dinner orators play at. It is what their friends expect and enjoy. We have a higher motive, and we therefore have better speeches.

The stock toasts, dealing with national subjects, are dealt with on both sides of the Atlantic by outpourings of platitudes, and seldom with a grain of sincerity. In that the Americans are superior to the English. They "orate" on their country's greatness at every opportunity, and when it is said they are better speakers you will find it is generally held so by those who are carried away by such rhetoric. As a specimen of the best American oratory I cannot select a better example than the following brief speech, the first made by the Hon. Joseph Choate in this country as United States Ambassador:—

"I accept this cordial welcome," said the new Ambassador, "not for myself, but for that friendly nation which I have been appointed to represent. The ports of New York and Southampton are now closely united by these great steamships—which fly between them like shuttles in the weaver's loom, connecting them by imperishable bonds. This mutual commerce and interchange of travel will do more to strengthen the ties that already unite the two countries than anything else can do; and if the men and women of England could visit the United States as freely as our countrymen flock to your shores, so that we could know each other better, that good understanding and fraternal feeling between the two peoples could never fail. Southampton has a special significance for all Americans, for it was from this ancient port, which for centuries before had witnessed the embarkation of all sorts of expeditions, that in the year 1620 our Pilgrim Fathers set sail in the *Mayflower* on that historic voyage which was to end in the planting of a new nation, which proved to be the first great departure of the English race from its island home and island life. Springing from this stock a Republic of seventy millions of people, allied in blood, in institutions, in interest, and in the hopes of the future, stretches forth across the Atlantic the right hand of fellowship, and is ready to meet the mother country more than half-way in everything that shall tend to promote the common good of the two nations and the general welfare of mankind. To-day the representative of the descendants of the hundred heroes and heroines of the *Mayflower* traverses the same seas in a single week in a mighty cruiser, just converted from a swift engine of war into a welcome messenger of peace, herself an emblem of that sea-power upon which the destinies of the Anglo-Saxon race depend. As I go to present my letter of credence from the President to your illustrious Sovereign, who, after more than sixty years, still reigns supreme in the hearts of her subjects and commands the affectionate admiration of my own countrymen as their ever-faithful and steadfast friend, I accept your cordial greeting as a harbinger of that practical friendship which is henceforth to control and govern the conduct of the two nations."



THE HON. JOSEPH CHOATE.

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Americans have a trick in after-dinner speaking. They lead up to a story, or two or three, as the case may be, and when you are laughing at that story they sit down. An American, in fact, saves himself the trouble of making a speech by telling a story. English speakers are too serious, Americans too frivolous. The clever manner in which they drag in a story seems to be the clever part of their after-dinner oratory. A Depew or a Horace Porter will drag in half-a-dozen good stories, and throw off a peroration as a sort of solid food after several pleasant, but not very substantial, *entrées*.

By the way, there is a well-known story attributed, I believe, to General Horace Porter, who was referred to by the chairman in the following way:—

"We have here to-night General Horace Porter, and I call upon him for a speech. The gentleman is like a slot machine: you put in a dinner and out comes a speech."

The witty and gallant General rose, and replied with a quick fire of satire which killed the vulgar chairman on the spot:—

"The chairman has thought fit to liken me to a slot machine. May I return the compliment, and say that he is like one also? He puts in a speech and up comes your dinner."



GENERAL HORACE PORTER.

I have no doubt, however, that Americans are better at an impromptu speech than the English. To speak impromptu is dangerous. One may kill himself by making an exhibition of imbecility or kill his friends by an exhibition of boredom. I rather appreciate the remark of the Irishman who, suddenly called to fight, took to his heels, and when stopped said:—

"It's better to be a coward for five minutes than to be a dead man all your lifetime."

But the American is always ready with a story, and therefore always ready with a speech. Now, this last witticism was introduced into a speech at one of the most important dinners in New York, at which I was present, by Mr. Depew himself, so you see in clever hands a joke need not be a new one. An American after-dinner speech is like one of the sky-scraper buildings in the country: there is a frame of commonplace built upon a foundation of common sense. With marvellous rapidity story after story is formed until the height of eloquence is reached. The crust of ornamental compliments cannot hide the irony it covers, and these piles of stories are so alike you cannot tell one from the other.

Let me show you how the trick is done.

A gentleman at a dinner would have a little story such as this, and would introduce it in this way:—

"Mr. Chairman, did you know my feelings at the present moment and realize how very ragged they are, you would probably have pity upon me, as the benevolent lady had for the tramp in tatters, when she said to him:—

"'My man, your clothes seem to be very ragged; can I do anything to mend them for you?' To which he replied:—

"'Well, ma'am, I have a button, and I would be very glad if you would sew a coat on to it.'

"Well, sir, I have a story, and I shall be very glad if anyone will sew a speech on to it."

The joke is almost as worn out as the coat, but the Americans seem to enjoy a joke the oftener they hear it.

A gentleman at a dinner is called upon to take the place of another on the toast list—that is, to make a speech earlier in the evening than he is put down for on the

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toast list; ten to one he will begin with this:—

"I feel I have no right here, for my time has not yet come. I am reminded of the story of the little boy in the village playing on a doorstep all by himself, who, when good-natured passers-by said: 'Why, little boy, play all by yourself? Why not join the others inside?' replied: 'I mustn't. I am going to play the baby, and I'm not born yet.'"

Now, in the case of being called upon unexpectedly, the following will be acceptable at any gathering of Americans:—

"I do not understand why I am called upon to speak to this toast. The reasons, no doubt, are various, but I am not convinced, and I know there is something in the compliments paid me, so I'll not spoil the compliments by asking for a reason. If I examine that reason, I would probably be as the man who said: 'When that clock hand stands at two and it strikes six I shall know the time is seven.' I am afraid I must finish—my glass is run—I have taken up all the time one should with a worthless speech. Thanks, but I'm not going to imitate the parson in the little Presbyterian village, who when preaching placed an old half-hour-glass on the pulpit; then, when the sand was out, he would lean over to his congregation and say: 'Have another glass and linger with me still.' I don't know if it were the same parson who, when he died, had engraved on his tombstone the simple words, 'My glass is run,' and some mischievous urchin added one stroke to the last letter, and it read, 'My glass is rum.' Whatever my glass is, I drink to you, and I'll have another glass and linger with you still."

Numerous instances are recorded of speakers mixing their metaphors, and either through ignorance or nervousness saying the wrong thing. One instance: A certain Duke, presiding at the farewell dinner to Mr. John Hare, who was starting for America to play in Mr. Pinero's "Problem Plays" (Mr. Pinero was vice-chairman of the banquet), made the theme of his speech an attack upon the production of these very plays! I remember many others. One I read about in America is too good to omit.

General Fosse, an American officer and supporter of negro emancipation, once made a very animated address on behalf of the coloured population. A dinner was given subsequently to the General, when one of the sable guests, being called upon for a toast, was desirous of conveying the idea, by the sentiment he should give, that the General, though he was a *white* man, was nevertheless full of sympathy for the negroes. He therefore rose and gave "Massa General Foss; he have *white* skin, but very *black* heart."

Sir Henry Irving always makes interesting after-dinner speeches, and it is needless to say they are delivered in artistic style. His speeches are carefully prepared and printed in very large block type, easily read at a distance. Herein lies the triumph of the actor. These slips are artfully placed on the table out of the sight of the audience; and while one of the speaker's hands rests artistically on his hip, the other toys with a fruit-knife, and with it pages of the speech are turned over as they are read. So perfectly is this acted, so gracefully does the body sway, and so well-timed are the pauses in the speech that only those seated in close proximity to Sir Henry are aware he is reading his speech. If one cannot trust to memory this system is preferable to the prompter system, which some actors prefer from sheer force of habit. A



SIR HENRY IRVING.

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friend on the prompt side is entrusted with the copy of the speech and acts the rôle of the prompter in the theatre. It is curious how some speakers cannot shake off this habit. This was most noticeable in the House of Commons, when the late Lord Russell sat in Parliament as Mr. Gladstone's Home Rule Attorney-General. He requiring a level-headed legal mind for Solicitor-General called in Mr. J. Rigby, direct from court practice to the front bench in Parliament. Mr. Rigby was duly knighted and called upon to answer questions and make speeches, but force of habit debarred him from doing either in the stereotyped Parliamentary fashion, *i.e.*, standing at the table sideways to the Speaker. He had invariably been accustomed to address the judge while facing him, so in like manner he must now perforce face the Speaker. In such matters the etiquette of Parliament is most punctilious. No one standing on the floor, while addressing the House, is allowed to place either foot beyond the edge of the mat running parallel to the seats. Should he so transgress, loud calls to order are immediately heard; yet here was a member of the Ministry not only overstepping the red-bordered mat, but taking several steps round the corner of the table, and—shade of Erskine!—standing in front of the mace addressing the Speaker. The House accepted the humour of the situation and laughed heartily, which was the only thing to do under the circumstances, for the Solicitor-General could not manage to get a word out until he stood in the House as he did in the court, *i.e.*, in front of the Bench.



LORD LEIGHTON.

Another curious illustration of the force of habit was the system adopted by Lord Leighton, late President of the Royal Academy. It may be true that "The pencil speaks the tongue of every land," and it is equally true that Lord Leighton very nearly did the same thing. But artists as after-dinner speakers are sadly disappointing. That linguist and otherwise accomplished President I have mentioned had the reputation of being an orator. He certainly, in a weak falsetto voice, whined through long-winded platitudes and prettily-turned sentences; his speeches were exactly the same as his art: correct in outline, florid and conventional in colour, flat and thin in technique, pleasing, smooth, graceful, gorgeously framed—and soon forgotten. Lord Beaconsfield, on being asked at the Royal Academy banquet by an admirer of Leighton what he thought of that artist's speech, replied, with a shrug: "H'm, the French pastry of oratory." Rough, ready, delightful, and natural, Sir John Millais, on the other hand, made no effort and no success as a speaker. When he first took the chair at the banquet, poor fellow! his fatal disease was already troubling him. He had to appeal to his audience for indulgence as he was no orator, and was furthermore suffering from hoarseness, yet by a strange coincidence facing him on the walls was his large ghost picture, called "Speak! Speak!" Lord Leighton did not read from a manuscript, but, having written out his speech, learnt it by heart, and then, through force of habit, actually fancied that he saw it on the wall, and *read* it word for word in imagination. "That accounts for my moving my head from side to side while I am speaking," he informed a friend of mine. There is no doubt artists can remember the form of what they read as they can remember all forms, but it is a curious fact that others besides artists have in their "mind's-eye" some form upon which they build their speeches. Charles Dickens—in the opinion of those lucky enough to have heard the great author one of the best after-dinner speakers both as regards matter and delivery—likened his speech to a cart-wheel. "The outset was the tyre, he being the hub. From the hub to the tyre he would run as many spokes as there were subjects to be treated, and during the progress of the speech he would deal with each spoke separately, elaborating them as he went round the wheel; and when all the spokes dropped out one by one, and nothing but the tyre and space remained, he would know that he had accomplished his task and that his speech was at an end." So wrote his friend and manager of his

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reading tours, the late Mr. Dalby, and adds: "It was my fortune on many occasions to accompany Mr. Dickens when he took the chair at public dinners or meetings, and, remembering on all such occasions his plan of action, I have been amused to observe him dismiss the spoke from his mind by a quick action of the finger, as if he were knocking it away."



CHARLES DICKENS.

John Bright, "Silver Tongue," one of the greatest speakers of our time, after making a remarkable speech, happened to leave his notes on the table. An admirer eagerly seized them. "Now I shall discover this extraordinary man's method." I forget the actual words, but they were few and something like "cats," "fuzz-wuzzy," "Caliban," "Lachesis," "abracadabra," "snuff," "toads." Needless to say, he was not particularly enlightened.

An easy method by which to escape any effort in after-dinner speaking is to repeat the same words time after time. Our greatest cricketer, as is well known, does not make speeches with as much facility as he makes runs; and when he was on tour in Australia as captain of the English team had to return thanks time after time. He merely repeated a dozen or so words of simple gratitude precisely the same on each occasion, and in that way established another record. After I had an action brought against me by the late George Augustus Sala for some chaffing remarks made in an after-dinner speech, whenever called upon I excused myself from making another, being nervous that in paying a compliment to some thin-skinned person present I might again find myself in the Law Courts. I had a stereotyped speech which served for some time.



LORD ROSEBERY.

Our cleverest dramatist, Mr. Pinero, imitates Sir Henry Irving's method exactly, but he is even more deceptive in order to conceal the fact that he reads his speech. He more than once stops abruptly, looks quickly to a far corner of the table, evidently fixing his piercing eye upon some particular diner, says, "What do I hear that gentleman say?" (Pause.) "Well, if he means by that interruption," etc., and replies to the imaginary gentleman in a delightful, supposititious impromptu. That is clever and decidedly legitimate, for, after all, a speech should be an entertainment, and effect, however produced, is everything, particularly if speeches are endowed with that literary merit as such speakers as I write of possess; it is just as well they should be carefully prepared beforehand and guided by elaborate notes.

Of Lord Rosebery I would say his matter is better

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than his manner. To me he never seems to feel what he says; his face remains a mask, neither the mouth nor the eye being that of an orator.

Mr. Augustine Birrell is now the popular humorist after dinner, particularly when



MR. AUGUSTINE BIRRELL.

political. Mr. G. B. Shaw is as amusing, audacious, and unconventional in speech as he is in his writing.

I must class with the last two humorists an after-dinner speaker who has lately sprung into popularity. I refer to Mr. M. H. Spielmann, the well-known art critic, author of "The History of *Punch*," editor of the *Magazine of Art*, etc. I have heard many speakers on both sides of the Atlantic, but none better than he—witty, literary, with a capital delivery and easy manner. I first heard him speak as chairman of the New Vagabond Club. Out of this vagabond jester's wallet I filch a few crumbs of wit:—

"We are vagabonds. As Alexander Smith says, 'Nature makes us vagabonds; the world makes us respectable.' Let me say at once, therefore, so that there should be no mistake, that there is a disreputable type of vagabond from whom we entirely dissociate ourselves. We all of us know the type and its species—the 'perverted vagabond'—the man with all our few vices and none of our many virtues. He is the sham Bohemian, the man who professes to be 'a close friend,' and is never so close as when he is asked for money. He is a 'hanger-on,' for whom literature is as much a 'hand to mouth' profession as dentistry. But, ladies and gentlemen, even a worm will turn—if you keep it long enough, and we turn against the smirchers of our name and order." Then, *à propos* of including "lady vagabonds" as a complete change in the policy of the club, he tells a capital story: a case of an old gentleman comfortably installed in a non-smoking railway compartment at Paddington, when an Eton boy entered, pulled out a big cigar, and was just going to strike a light when the old gentleman broke out: "Young sir, this isn't a smoking carriage." The boy struck his



MR. GEORGE BERNARD SHAW.

match as he replied: "Precious soon will be!" Another capital story I recall in that rich feast of the best humour: "There is an Oriental saying, 'Who is the happier—the man with a million of money or a man with nine daughters? The man with nine daughters, because he doesn't want any more.'"

To those who are fortunate enough to hear

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Mr. Spielmann speechify, however, this would not apply; for, like Oliver Twist, they would certainly "ask for more."

It is not often that the toast of "The Navy" is responded to by a witty representative of our "Handy-men." Of course, Lord Charles Beresford is always interesting and amusing; but then he has some set, serious purpose in speaking. For a witty, unofficial, nautical after-dinner speaker I would suggest Admiral Sir William Kennedy: his stories are always fresh and amusing. I select two. The following is an episode in his career he amused the Authors' Club with. A retired boatswain of the Royal Navy bought a little house within sound of the sea, in which he lived. Each morning he was called at 4 a.m. by a boy, who received sixpence a week for this service. The neighbours, curious to know the reason of this apparently purposeless call, interrogated the boy.



MR. M. H. SPIELMANN.

Neighbours: "Why do you call him at 4 a.m., and what occurs?"

Boy: "I calls him at 4 a.m., and says he to me, says he, 'How's the weather?' I answers, 'A dark and stormy morning,' and has orders to add, 'and the captain wants you immediately on deck.' He answers, 'Tell the captain to go to Jericho,' and he rolls over and falls asleep again."

Another story—The Sea Lawyers. While stationed on the coast of Newfoundland the admiral, then a captain, and his first lieutenant were made Justices of the Peace, in order that they might adjudicate on the cases and disputes of the inhabitants in remote parts of the iron-bound coast where J.P.'s never ventured to voyage. The inhabitants were accustomed to store up the questions and cases until a man-of-war arrived and then bring them before the captain. At one part of the coast a complicated question of title to land was awaiting decision. It had been brought before several naval captains, all of whom had failed to understand it or settle it. When H.M.S. *Druid* arrived on the spot the inhabitants came down, eager to have the knotty point settled. The captain and his first lieutenant sat on the quarter-deck, the inhabitants grouped around, and the case was argued from early morning to evening. Each hour it became more entangled and complicated; the seamen knitted their brows, and at the close of the arguments said that as it was a case of great importance they would take time to consider and give their decision next morning. The inhabitants left, and came down next morning, rejoicing to think that the case would at last be settled, but only to see H.M.S. *Druid* disappearing below the horizon.



ADMIRAL SIR WILLIAM KENNEDY

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The Would-Be Assassin.

By Edwin Pugh.

THE Sons o' Freedom were unanimously agreed that England was in a bad way. They called themselves the Bermondsey Branch of the Sons o' Freedom; but they were, in fact, the whole tree—and a leafless, fruitless tree, too. They met in a small room over the bar of the Box o' Nails public-house, and their induction ceremony was as funny as an indifferently modelled plaster skull could make it. They were mostly gin-bitten loafers who had never done an honest day's work in their lives. They always knew what the Government was going to do long before the Government had decided to do something else. Their watchword was "Progress," and their motto: "Those who live only in the past should be made a part of the past." They were noisy and unclean and ignorant. And only one of them was, in any sense, sincere.

That one was the secretary, Bertie Spell.

He was a young man with a sallow, greasy face and an epileptic laugh. He could stand on a chair and rave as if his foot were on the neck of the world. He could spout raw treason until he was the only one in the room who was not tired.

"All very well to talk," said Bob Fields, the president, one sultry autumn evening. "But fine words butter no parsnips." He sucked ferociously at his pipe. "What we want is a man who'll *do* something."

Bertie Spell looked somewhat abashed. He ceased to saw the air with his soft, dirty hand.

"What is there to do?" he asked. "We agitate."

"Agitate ourselves. Yuss. And what for? What's the good of it?" He rose with a snarl. "I'd give all the agitators in the world for one man with a knife."

Bertie pursed his lips. "Times are not ripe for that sort o' thing."

"I believe you. They're rotten."

"All very fine to talk! But what would *you* do?"

"Me? 'Tain't for me to do nothing. The brain plans and the hand strikes. I'm the chairman o' the organization committee o' this society, remember. You don't go putting a general on outpost duty."

"No," said Bertie Spell, vaguely. "Still, I hardly see——"

"Too busy talking to see anything," grunted Fields.

Bertie Spell hung his head. Fields seized the opportunity to exchange a solemn wink with his mates. Baiting the secretary was good fun, and easy as cadging.

"What we ought to do," said one, McGarron, "is to make an example o' somebody."

"How do you mean?" he was asked.

"A little blood-letting. Healthy for the constitution. I say no more," McGarron replied.

"Shoot——?"

"Shoot! Stab! Blow up! *I* don't care! Why should we leave all that sort o' thing to foreigners? Ain't we as good men as them there Eyetalians? Well, then!"

"Who would you begin with, Mac?" asked little Spider Hayes.

"I'd begin wi' one o' them there half-baked Imperialist blokes, that's who I'd begin with."

"Harringay?"

"Ah, or Cantelupe," suggested the chairman. "Think what it'd be to stop his gallop. But what's the use o' talking? We're all too good at that. 'Specially young Bertie there."

"Fact o' the matter is," said little Spider Hayes, "there ain't a man among us wi' the backbone of a herring."

Bertie Spell lifted his head. His high cheekbones shone damp. "Would you do it, Spider?"

"Do what?"

"Shoot Cantelupe."

"Only let him walk in here. I'd show you, then."

"Drop him a card, Spider. He'd be bound to call," guffawed McGarron.

"You know what I mean, Mac," said Spider Hayes, darkly.

They were all portentously solemn in an instant. "Oh, we know what you *mean*," they said.

"But," exclaimed Spell, as if he were

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uttering his thoughts, "why should you expect me to—to act, rather than anybody else?"

"We don't expect you to act," said Fields. "That's our worriment."

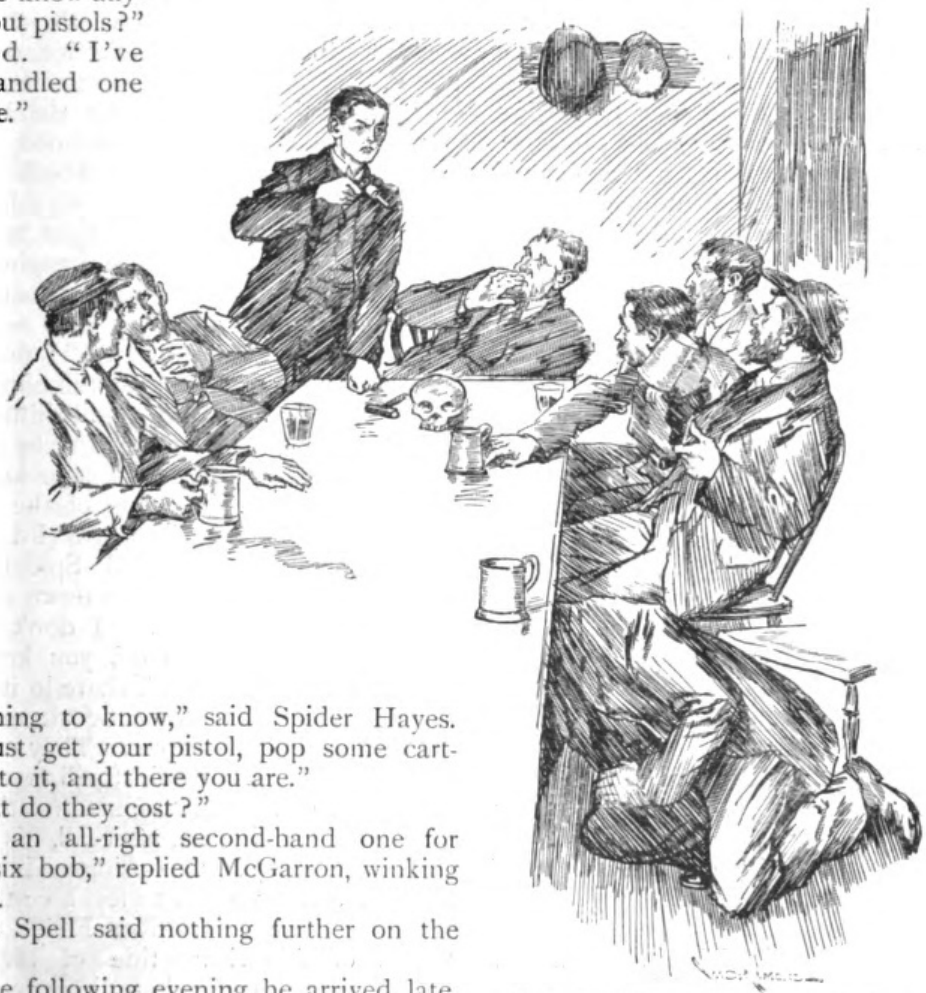
"After all, if you are the president, I'm the secretary."

"No need to keep chewing it, Bertie."

They talked of other things. But Spell sat silently apart.

"Drink up, Bertie," said McGarron.

He drank and spoke rather huskily. "Anybody here know anything about pistols?" he asked. "I've never handled one in my life."



"SPIDER PROMPTLY DISAPPEARED UNDER THE TABLE."

"Nothing to know," said Spider Hayes. "You just get your pistol, pop some cartridges into it, and there you are."

"What do they cost?"

"Get an all-right second-hand one for five or six bob," replied McGarron, winking furiously.

Bertie Spell said nothing further on the matter.

On the following evening he arrived late. He shook hands formally all round, performed the usual hocus-pocus with the skull, then stalked to the head of the table. He struck the sloppy board with his fist.

"Brethren," he called out, loudly, in thin, nasal tones, "I have got something to show you."

He thrust his hand into the breast of his coat and began to struggle with the torn lining of his pocket.

"What is it? Conjuring trick?" asked McGarron.

The others watched him curiously. At last he succeeded in extricating something bulky and shiny from the muddle of rags in which it had become entangled. The thing was a pistol. He rested the muzzle of it on the table, crossed his legs, and regarded them fixedly.

"Here," said he, "is the weapon."

He uncrossed his legs, snapped the trigger, and pointed the pistol at Spider Hayes. Spider promptly disappeared under the table.

"Put it down, you fool!" shouted Fields. "It might go off."

Bertie pointed it at him, and he joined Spider.

"It won't go off—yet!" said Bertie Spell, in the best style of melodrama. "It isn't loaded," he added, a little lamely.

Spider and the president reappeared.

"Why didn't you say so?"

"Playing the goat like that!"

They resumed their seats, grumbling.

"With this weapon," Bertie Spell announced, "I mean to strike the first blow at the tyranny which triumphs over us."

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"Hear, hear!" they cried, coughing to mask their grins.

"With this weapon," Bertie continued, "I mean to rid the world of that monster of iniquity, Cantelupe!"

They battered on the table with their pots.

"Yesterday," the fatuous youth went on, "I was scorned, laughed at, derided, made the butt of jests. To-day I come before you a foredoomed martyr to the cause of freedom." He indulged in much more similar bombast.

They circled and hummed about him. For he brought a breath of determined sincerity into their deliberations that made them feel, somehow, holy and dedicate. Almost he persuaded them that they were indeed a band of desperate patriots. They did not believe that he was truly serious, of course. They regarded the whole display as a piece of timely, excellent mumming, and no more than that. But the pistol looked colourably like real treason, and they were elated. The weapon passed from hand to hand and was gingerly inspected. The trigger was cocked and pulled, and the chambers revolved with a murderous click, click.

"How many traitors, now, could you account for wi' that?" little Spider Hayes inquired.

"Five," answered Bertie Spell. "Supposing you didn't miss any."

"It'd work out at about a bob a traitor," mused McGarron.

For a week Bertie basked in the lustre of the pistol. He breathed a rarefied air of adulation that intoxicated him. But at the end of the week Fields, who had grown gloomy in eclipse, remarked rather pointedly:—

"Well, we've had the grand *ongtray* of clowns. Now, when's the circus going to begin?"

"Meaning the shooting?" said McGarron.

"Meaning the shooting," Fields assented, solemnly.

"I haven't bought any cartridges yet," stammered Bertie Spell. "I'm going to, though. And then——"

"And then—what?" asked Fields, unpleasantly.

"You will see," said Bertie. "I say nothing."

"Seems to me you say a lot," Fields growled. "All jaw, you are, like a sheep's jimmy."

Bertie Spell was discomfited. "Can't do everything in a minute," he protested. "The thing—details, you know—wants planning out. I'm game enough, as I'll prove to you. But what I want to know is, how am I to get at him?"

"That's easily arranged," said McGarron. "Every week-end he goes down to Bullen Priors, in Darkshire, where he's got a sort of a castle, blight him! All you've got to do is to go down there, too, next Saturday, and wait for him at the station."

"And what then?" asked Bertie, tremulously.

"What then? Why, you just shoot him. That's all."

"But there would be a lot of people about."

"What's that matter? All the better."

"But——" Bertie moistened his lips. "I should be arrested. If I killed him I should be hanged."

"Of course you would," they responded, cheerfully. "Still, all the hanging in the world wouldn't bring Cantelupe back to life. You must think o' that."

"Mark you," said Bertie, "I don't mind killing him. I'm going to kill him. Question is, why shouldn't I kill him without risking being hanged myself? Why shouldn't I waylay him in some quiet lane and do the deed? I could leave one of the society's cards on his body to show why I'd done it."

"Cheese it!" exclaimed Spider Hayes. "We should have the police down on us."

"Well," said Bertie, "I don't want to collar all the glory myself, you know. No reason why you shouldn't share in it too."

This remark, for some occult reason, did not please them, however. They exchanged alarmed glances. Bertie Spell was displaying a grim earnestness of manner that made them wonder whether, after all, his talk was but mere empty vapouring. In spite of themselves they began to feel a certain awful respect for the boy. But Fields, jealously fearful of this rising tide of favour that threatened to rehabilitate his rival in the esteem of the meeting, distributed winks, thick and fast, to reassure them.

"I put it to you," said he, "ain't we had about enough o' this here tomfoolery? We know very well what it all amounts to. Our young friend and brother has amused himself at our expense long enough, I reckon. I suggest we closure the subject for good and all."

Bertie Spell, white and trembling, indignantly protested in a speech that bristled with cant Parliamentary terms. This was worse than the obstructive methods of a das-

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tardly Opposition, he maintained. Were they, the Sons o' Freedom, to ape the shallow artifices of that corrupt House whose very existence they had banded themselves together to abolish? He requested the hon. president to withdraw the offensive term, "tomfoolery."

"That's all gay, Bertie," said Fields. "'Ere, what's Mr. Spell done that his glass should be empty?"

A truce to hostilities was called and ratified. Bertie, maudlin tears in his eyes, shook hands with Fields across the table.

"But, by the sacred emblem of the skull," he declared, "I'll show you whether I'm a wind-bag or a man!"

Next day he bought cartridges, and carried a loaded pistol to the Box o' Nails. During a pause in the talk he suddenly rose and pointed the pistol at a vase on the shelf. He pulled the trigger. There was a dull snap, but no report. His fellow-members adjured him solemnly to put his weapon up.

"Blame the thing!" he muttered, and tried again.

This time he fired successfully. The vase fell in shattered fragments to the floor, and the room was filled with smoke.

"Thus shall Cantelupe fall!" said he.

"'Ere, be careful!" Fields exclaimed. "No need to break up the 'appy 'ome."



"'THUS SHALL CANTELUPE FALL!' SAID HE."

"What I suggest is this," said Spider Hayes: "put the instrument o' vengeance on the mantelpiece where we can all see it, and then drink to the 'ealth of our noble brother, Albert Spell."

This suggestion was popularly acclaimed and forthwith adopted.

"Spell!" they roared. "Spell!"

The contents of the glasses gurgled down their throats.

It was in the golden glow of a misty November morning, some four or five days later, that Bertie Spell alighted from the train at Bullen Priors and made his way up the winding, hilly High Street toward Glebe Place, Cantelupe's country residence. He called in at the Olde Lion for a dram, and inquired of the landlord, artlessly, if the famous Minister was staying in that neighbourhood. The landlord answered "Yes," and proceeded to give details of Cantelupe's life in retirement.

"He is just like one o' we," said the worthy host. "Potterin' in his garden, maunderin' about the lanes, wi' his dogs an' his fly-net, or mayhap a greenheart rod—— you'd never take him for the great man he be up to Lunnon."

Bertie thanked him and, with new agitating tremors in his breast, pursued his way.

He found Glebe Place readily. It was an old greystone manse, built on a wild, weed-infested patch of upland. A high wall enclosed it. There was a tiny lodge beside a great gate of scrolled ironwork. Bertie Spell peered through the gate. A rubbly carriage-drive led straight to the door of the house; but, saving the presence of a strutting peacock and a host of humbler birds, there was no sign of life visible. So Bertie decided to await contingencies.

He withdrew to a belt of trees that overshadowed the lane, and sat down on a fallen trunk and took out his pistol. He had by this time grown accustomed to the

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look and heft of the weapon; but he was still, nevertheless, a little afraid of the deadly thing. His hand trembled as he toyed with it. Once he dropped it on the damp, dead leaves, and a frightened cry escaped him. He restored it to the pocket of his shabby overcoat. For two or three hours he loitered there in the wood; and the hope grew in him momentarily that Cantelupe would not appear. He had taken only an excursion ticket and must return that day at nightfall.

It was afternoon when, at last, he heard the iron gates of Glebe Place clang harshly together. He stepped cautiously to the edge of the thicket and gazed out through a trailing vine on the narrow road.

An old gentleman in a tweed suit was strolling leisurely away from him. His head was bent over a book, which he held close to his eyes, as if he were short-sighted. A big, shaggy dog, that had followed him from the house, lay rolling in the dusty highway. The old gentleman turned and whistled, and Bertie Spell recognised in the puckered, pink and white face the features of the hated Cantelupe. Never before had he seen the great man in the flesh, but many caricatures had made his features familiar to him. He had a feeling of mild, unreasonable surprise at finding that Cantelupe was not tricked out in some absurd disguise, such as the comic papers delighted to present him in; that he was neither old woman nor clown, neither rat, mole, dog, ass, pig, ape, but just a conventionally-clad English gentleman, betraying an obvious feebleness of old age in every precise, deliberate movement. The dog got up and trotted after its master. Bertie Spell, having considered the situation, followed on also.

But he still kept in the friendly shelter of the trees. It was parlous boggy underfoot and damp overhead, for there had been a heavy dew. At each step he shook down a shower of sparkling drops. The brambles clung to his clothes and tore his hands. His boots sank deep in the slushy soil, rotten with decaying pine-cones, husks of nuts, and skeletons of leaves. Still, at each stride he gained on Cantelupe; for the old man went very, very slowly.

When he was come almost abreast with his quarry Bertie plunged deeper into the belt of wood, made a wide *détour* that brought him upon an open common, then struck toward the road again some three furlongs farther down. The covert was too sparse to conceal him now; so, taking heart of necessity, he climbed down into the road.

It was a lonely spot. The tortuous way wound north and south between high, powdery banks, all covered with hanging ferns and grasses. There was no one in sight, no sign of human habitation. Bertie Spell lurked behind a tree and waited.

Presently Cantelupe appeared, still poring over his book, the great, shaggy dog ambling heavily beside him. Bertie Spell was afflicted with symptoms of collapse: a dryness of the throat, a weakness in the knees, heat at the stomach, chill at the extremities. A dank moisture that broke out on him made the air feel icy cold about his head. He was within an ace of retreating into the wood again and abandoning his enterprise. But he remembered in time his daring vows, and the manifold humiliations that any pusillanimity on his part would entail now.

It is hard to follow the workings of such a mind. Perhaps he did, indeed, imagine himself to be a hero. Perhaps, in the muddy recesses of his inner consciousness, there lived a sincere sentiment of perverted altruism which made the killing of Cantelupe seem to him an act of righteous retribution. Certainly vanity and a weak, overweening desire to gild his own poor name and cut a romantic figure of sacrifice before the world played their part in nerving him to perform what he had threatened. He stepped into the middle of the road and cocked his trigger.

Cantelupe, all unaware of what awaited him, came steadily on. The dog ran ahead and nosed at Bertie's knees. Bertie felt that there was no further time to waste. Cantelupe was not more than twelve yards away. He lifted the pistol to a level with his eyes, took hurried aim, and fired.

There was a little, dull snap, but no report.

Frenziedly he readjusted the trigger, pulled it again—and again the weapon missed fire.

Cantelupe was so close to him now that he had no time to make a third attempt. He could see the old man's rheumy eyes and venous forehead over the top of the book. To avoid an actual collision he stepped aside. The dog growled.

Cantelupe lowered his book. "Down, Queen!" He stared at Bertie Spell. "Halloa, young man! What do you want?"

He blinked at Bertie owlishly.

"Pardon me. I'm so blind. Do I know you?"

He drew a pair of spectacles from his pocket, adjusted them on his nose, then scanned Bertie's shrinking figure from sodden,

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"HIS GAZE RESTED PARTICULARLY ON THE PISTOL."

dripping hat to muddy boots. His gaze rested particularly on the pistol.

"I see," said he. "Well, let me have a look at it."

As one in a dream Bertie handed the pistol to him.

"H'm! h'm!" the old man doddered. "You were taking it up to The Place, I suppose. H'm! I don't know that I want it. But I'll look at it. I'll look at it. H'm!" He was examining the pistol closely. "Looks like—— But I can't see here. I must put it under a glass. Are you living in the village?"

"No, sir," faltered Bertie Spell, giddy with perplexity.

"Visitor? H'm! Excursionist? H'm! Perhaps you'd better come up to The Place with me, then. You're not a dealer?" he inquired, suspiciously.

"No, sir."

"Glad to hear it. Can't stand dealers. Come along."

They retraced their steps adown the lane, Cantelupe carrying the pistol and walking at an enhanced pace; Bertie Spell shuffling beside him with a head like a humming-top.

The porter swung back the iron gates, and they went up the weed-grown carriage drive to the house. In the spacious stone hall Cantelupe asked Bertie:—

"What will you drink? Whisky? H'm! Brandy? H'm!"

"Brandy," said Bertie Spell, who felt that he needed it.

"Bring some Courvoisier up to my museum," said Cantelupe to a footman. "Come on, young man."

He led Bertie Spell upstairs to the most marvellous room that he had ever beheld. There were glass cases ranged round the walls from floor to ceiling. They were stored with a wondrous collection of strange treasures—precious and rare antiquities, miracles of beauty from sea and mine, costly ornaments from the uttermost ends of the earth, curious products of alien civilizations, living, moribund, and dead.

"Have a look round while I examine this pistol, mister," said Cantelupe. "Ah, thank you," as a footman entered with a jingling tray. "Will you please help yourself?"

Bertie Spell helped himself with fine liberality.

"It's the best dream-brandy I ever tasted," he reflected.

Cantelupe had taken the pistol to the window and placed it under a powerful lens.

"What's it loaded with ball-cartridge for? Wrong size, too," he quavered, peevishly. "You've jammed it, you silly man."

Bertie, drying his palms on his trousers, knew not what to answer. Cantelupe extracted the cartridges carefully, one by one, as if absent-mindedly.

"H'm!" he said, at last. "Er—really, young man, I have so many fire-arms, the place is a perfect armoury. People seem to think they can shoot all their rubbish here and get a price for it. Still, as this is a Sévérac, and those French pieces are hard to get——" He faced about. "How much do you want for it? I'll pay your expenses

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down here and back, of course. Came by excursion, didn't you? Well, how much?"

"Really, sir, it was not my intention——"

"Pouf! Don't tell me you came down here for the sake of the fresh air. The pistol betrays you. What's your price?"

"I paid five shillings for it, sir," Bertie Spell blurted forth.

Cantelupe put the pistol down abruptly. "You paid how much?"

"Five shillings sir."

The Minister groaned.

"Why is it I can never pick up these bargains?" he exclaimed, testily. "Where did you get it?"

"At a pawnbroker's in the Borough, sir."

Cantelupe nodded disconsolately.

"I suppose you know how much it's worth?"

"No, sir."

"Man," cried Cantelupe, "are you a rascal or a fool? Why don't you haggle with me? I could beat you down with an easy conscience then. But if you really don't know the value of it—— Oh, but you do! Come, now, no more nonsense. How much do you want for it?"

Bertie Spell, bewildered and defeated, stammered out, "I would rather leave it to you, sir."

"Come here," said Cantelupe. "Turn your face to the window, hold up your head, man." He subjected Bertie to a keen scrutiny. "You seem to be an honest fellow," he said. "You should be intelligent, too, if I am any judge of a face. You drink too much, though." He paused, pondered. "I'll give you six pounds for the piece, and your expenses. I really couldn't offer you more than that. What?"

He counted out six pounds and ten shillings on the table. Bertie Spell, wondering when he would wake up, pocketed the money.



"'NOW BE OFF WITH YOU,' SAID CANTELUPE, LAUGHING GLEEFULLY AS HE PICKED UP THE PISTOL AGAIN."

"Now be off with you," said Cantelupe, laughing gleefully as he picked up the pistol again, and gloated over it. "Be you fool or rascal, that's the last doit you'll get out of me."

He offered Bertie his small, tenuous hand. "I am much obliged to you, sir," he said. "If you should happen to come across any other things of this sort——"

He, the great and wicked Cantelupe, himself escorted Bertie Spell to the door.

"Good-bye," he said, shaking hands again. "Don't forget me, Mister—er—whatever your name is."

The iron gates clanged behind Bertie Spell, and he was on the tree-lined road again.

"Forget you!" he said aloud, as he trudged toward the station, rattling the gold in his pocket. "Forget you!" He took out the coins one by one and tested them with his teeth. "Long may he wave!" he cried. "He's as good as his money."

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The Humour of Sport.

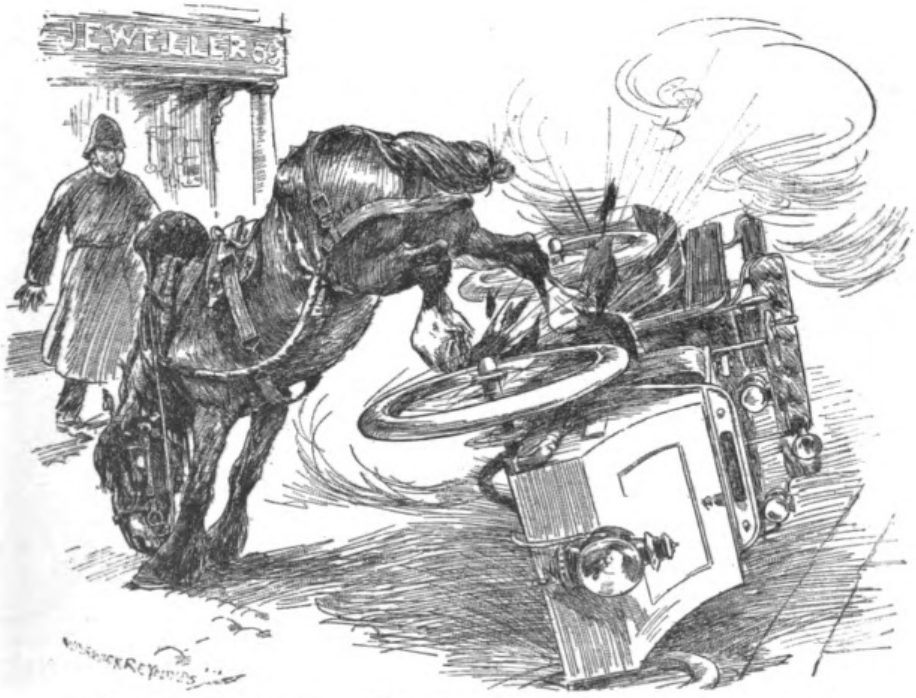
I.—AUTOMOBILISM.

By James Walter Smith.

THE joke-maker and comic draughtsman have discovered in automobilism a veritable El Dorado. Within the last two years, since the motor-car became popular and the joke-makers themselves became more full of knowledge of the subject, the humorous journals of this and other countries have been increasingly full of pleasantries, verbal and pictorial, hitting off the infirmities of motor-cars and the foibles of those who drive them. The result is a budget of fun which, being collected together, should cause a hearty laugh, and in this laughter the two classes into which the world is divided—those who mote and those who don't—should be able to join.

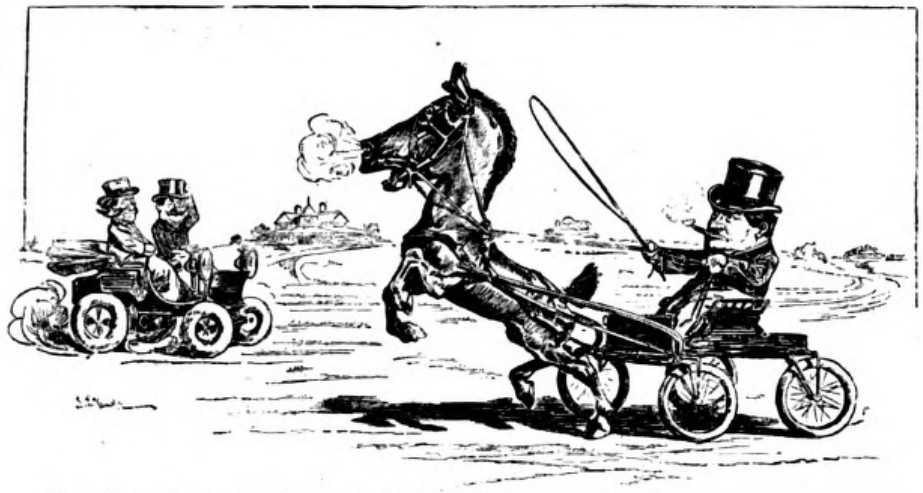
Inasmuch as our old friend Bucephalus, or, as he is better known, the common or garden horse, was probably the first to get an acute sensation on sight of the first automobile, so have the fun-makers done their best to try to tell us what the horse has thought upon this matter. Just what he did think is still open to doubt, otherwise there would have been one subject only for the artist to depict, but we may take it for granted that when the first motor-car came his way the horse realized that it was all up with his profession. The cab-horse had visions of a grazing-ground in which he should end his peaceful days, the plough-horse gave a gratified sigh as he looked forward to the day of a horseless plough, and the coster's donkey brayed with increasing vehemence and pricked up his ears at the passing whirr as the picture of 'Arry on a mechanical barrow flitted before his mental vision. One startled equine, as may be seen in our illustration, coming across a runaway and upturned motor, expressed his disdain of the whole thing by getting to work at once with his hind legs. Even the "bobby" stood by in astonishment as the outraged but respectable farm-horse emphasized his protests with the pointed remark, "You can go, but, hang it, you can't kick," whereas another, shown on the next page, took the automobile for a live waggon, and was content merely with a fit of hysterics.

The third picture illustrates the old-time saying that familiarity breeds contempt. It was not long before the equine world forgot its first impression and deter-



The Horse (to a runaway upturned motor): "You can go, but, hang it, you can't kick."
DRAWN BY WARWICK REYNOLDS FOR "THE KING."

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THE HORSE (seeing his first motor-car): "Look at this—a live waggon! Isn't that enough to give one hysterics?"

DRAWN BY J. S. PUGHE FOR "PUCK."

during 1901." Again, one chauffeur asks another: "Have any bad luck during your trip yesterday?" "Oh," was the answer, "I ran over a man, but I don't think I hurt the machine at all." In another case, where an automobile had broken down, the chauffeur was busy trying to discover the trouble. The impatient owner of the machine at last broke out: "Hurry up, Felix; there are a lot of people crossing the street whom we are missing."

mined to treat the new invader with a withering scorn. To-day he allows a whizzing automobile to pass him by without tremor, knowing that sooner or later he will experience the felicity of "towing in" one of the despised machines. In the motor-car *v.* horse contest the race is not always to the swift. The point was briefly put by one of our American friends in his picture of a city girl and an old farmer on a country road. "Mercy!" cried the timid miss, "here comes an automobile! Is your horse afraid of them?" With reassuring words the farmer replied: "Oh, no, miss; he's drawed so many of 'em up the hills hereabout that he's lost all respect for 'em."

Humorous artists have made a deal of fun at the recklessness of the chauffeur, and the jokes built up on this foundation have been even more numerous than the pictures. "Who got the annual booby prize from the automobile club?" asked one motorist of another. "Oh," was the reply, "Slowgo got it. He ran over only fourteen people

With their fondness for animal jokes, the American artists have depicted many scenes in which the effect of automobilism is shown upon the members of that kingdom. One of these, representing the horseless cab on its first trip in the jungle, will be found, upon close examination, to be a very happy and comprehensive skit upon the history of automobilism. The artist is a little rough on the sport when he makes the monkey the



FAMILIARITY BREEDS CONTEMPT.—Miss Manhattan (timidly): "Mercy, here comes an automobile! Is your horse afraid of them?"

Uncle Wayback (reassuringly): "Oh, no, miss; he's drawed so many of 'em up the hills hereabout that he's lost all respect for 'em."

DRAWN BY S. D. EHRHART FOR "PUCK."

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WHEN THE HORSELESS CAB STRIKES THE JUNGLE.
DRAWN BY B. J. L. FOR "JUDGE."

chauffeur, but he shows the rapidity with which the more intelligent members of the animal kingdom have grasped its pleasures; the appearance of the cab, moreover, has caused dire consternation. The ostrich promptly buries its head in the water, the tiger loses his tail under the forward wheel, the kangaroo leaps affrighted from the path of the reckless cab; birds, boars, lions, zebras, and Polar bears wildly scatter, while the simian policeman remonstrates forcibly with an obstreperous rhinoceros; the sun meanwhile looking on in derision at the genesis of jungle automobilism and the exodus of the jungle screechers. This delightful picture should be looked at in connection with the instantaneous view taken in an American park, shown on page 323.



No, this is not a collection of tubercular microbes escaping from the Congress, but merely the Montgomery Smiths in their motor-car enjoying the beauties of the country.

DRAWN BY STARR WOOD. REPRODUCED BY PERMISSION OF THE PROPRIETORS OF "PUNCH."

The hideous, though harmless, masks and general costumes with which the motorists bedeck themselves have likewise been considerably ridiculed by the humorist. One

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"Sua Cuique Voluptas."—A Study in Expression.
DRAWN BY G. D. ARMOUR. REPRODUCED BY PERMISSION OF THE PROPRIETORS OF "PUNCH."

of the fun-makers, in his drawing of two motorists on their plunging steed, assures us that his drawing shows, not a collection of microbes escaping from a tuberculosis congress, but merely the Montgomery Smiths enjoying the beauties of the country.

He who starts out on his first motor-car trip is very likely to get an automobile face, and the artist who made the study in expression, happily entitled "Sua cuique voluptas," or "Every man has his own pleasures," has cleverly depicted those pleasures. The man on the left of the carriage looks as though he were in for a non-stop run with a police summons in the distance, whereas the chauffeur, with a sort of Mephistophelian delight upon his countenance, spurs on his engine of destruction with a carelessness of "bobbies" born of practice.

It is all right for the joke-makers to poke fun at breakdowns and repairs, but if the artist were sitting on top of an iron fly-wheel, a gasolene tank, a water-jacket, a pump, rods, levers, gear-wheels, valves, a throttle, a thumping engine, boiler-tubes, fire, water-tank, electric battery, a condenser, a reversing switch, a piston, and the thousand and one intricate parts of which various motor-cars—steam, electric, gasolene, and otherwise—are made, he would have something to think of, and when a breakdown did occur he would well deserve to be scoffed at as he scoffs at others. The expert motorist needs all his wits about him at such a moment, should have a practical knowledge of machinery, and should be competent to deal with any accident that might occur. Thanks to mechanical improvements in the automobile, accidents and repairs are becoming increasingly infrequent, and if improvement goes on as it has been going the humorist who has discovered his highest



Owner of Violently Palpitating Motor-car: "There's no need to be alarmed; it will be all right as soon as I've discovered the what d'ye call it."
DRAWN BY L. RAVEN HILL. REPRODUCED BY PERMISSION OF THE PROPRIETORS OF "PUNCH."

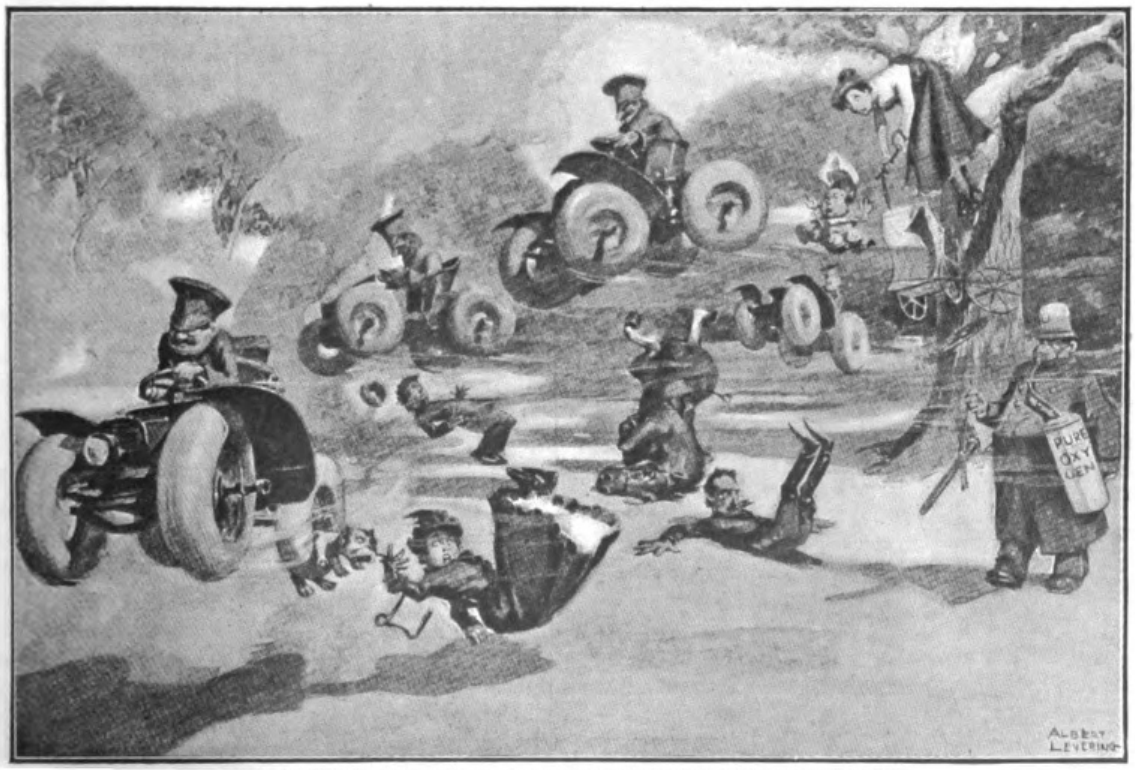
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ENOUGH TO MAKE A HORSE LAUGH.
DRAWN BY S. D. EHRHART FOR "PUCK."

satisfaction in portraying the motor and motorist in the accident and repairing stage will soon find his occupation gone. The people, too, are getting used to it, and it will not be long before the automobile enthusiast will make his repairs without the running fire of comment from an admiring crowd. The owner of the violently palpitating motor-car who cries out to the yokels: "There's no need to be alarmed; it will be all right as soon as I've discovered the what d'ye call it," is, of course, an amateur with a keen but misplaced appreciation of the virtues of a pitch-fork. It is one of the first lessons in automobilism that no man should interfere, by means of pitch-forks or otherwise, with the running-gear of a car, unless he is well prepared with renewal parts for the car — and himself.

He who is *en automobile*, from the mere man who suffers a side-slip on a greasy road —"enough," as one artist shows, "to make a horse laugh"—down to our old friend Santa Claus, who, marching in the van of progress, fails to get his Christmas presents to the children because of a breakdown in the snow, must be prepared to meet all sorts of



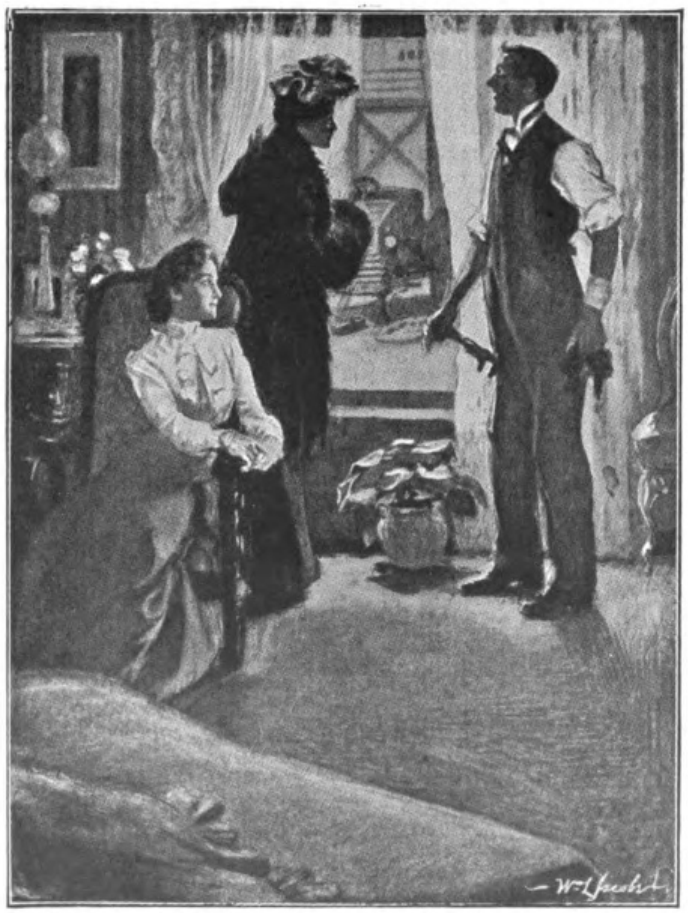
AN INSTANTANEOUS VIEW TAKEN IN CENTRAL PARK, NEW YORK.
DRAWN BY ALBERT LEVERING FOR "LIFE."

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WHY SOME CHILDREN DIDN'T GET THEIR PRESENTS.
DRAWN BY C. D. GIBSON FOR "LIFE."

derision. One equine member of a newly-organized coaching club bolstered up its class dignity by making a new rule to the effect that when an automobile goes lame it must get another automobile to haul it home. A noted automobile club made its runs more interesting by arranging before the start that each member should put so much into a pool. After the run the pool was divided amongst those whose automobiles had not broken down. An economical gentleman is reported to have said to another: "I made a good bargain with Jones just now." "Yes? What was it?" "Well, I'm to let him have the exclusive use of my automobile, and he's to pay for half the repairs." This was surely a case of misdirected economy, for it is shown in one of our illustrations that the fun comes in when you are your own mechanic. Says Biggs, in overalls and shirt-sleeves, to a lady friend: "Yes, I enjoy my motor-car immensely." The lady remarks: "But I never see you out." To which Biggs proudly replies: "Oh, I haven't got that far yet. I am just learning to make my own repairs."



WHERE THE FUN COMES IN.—Biggs: 'Yes, I enjoy my motor-car immensely."
She: "But I never see you out."
Biggs: "Oh, I haven't got that far yet. I am just learning to make my own repairs."
DRAWN BY W. L. JACOBS FOR "LIFE."

To judge by some of the accidents, according to a recent wit, *automoblesse n'oblige pas*, and the light-hearted way in which these accidents are joked about may appear to some people as if the present-day humorist had little conscience and less propriety. On behalf of the humorist, however, be it said

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A BEAUTY.—"Did you hear about Grigsby's auto? It ran away with him, went over an embankment, turned a somersault, hit a tree, killed Grigsby, and wasn't injured a particle!" "Gad! That's a beauty. What make is it?"

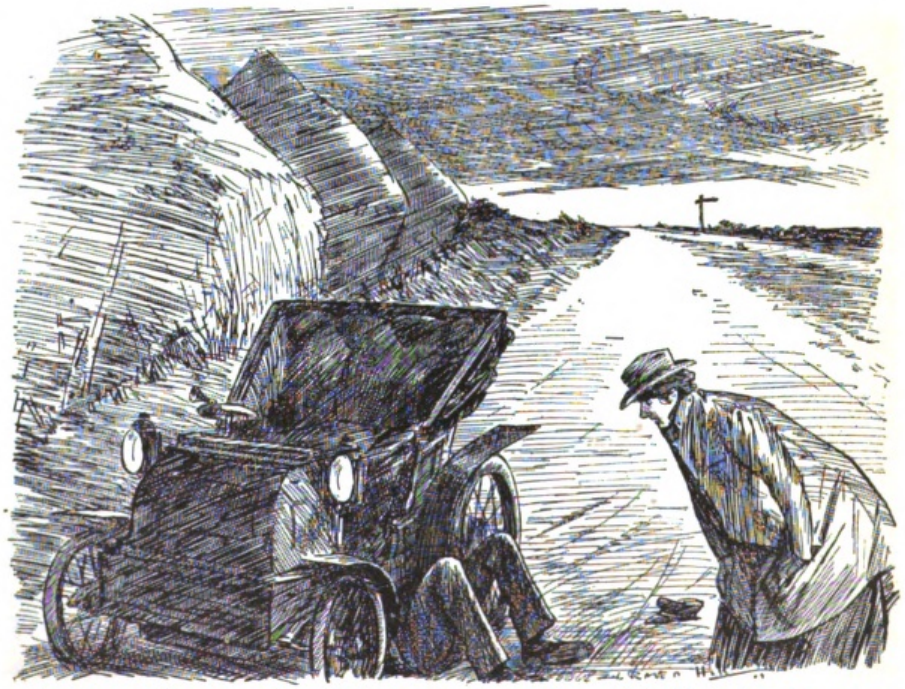
DRAWN BY W. H. GALLAWAY FOR "PUCK."

mobilism partakes of a troublous as well as a non-troublous existence. But the troubles which to an outsider would be overwhelming seem to possess a certain form of gratification to the motor enthusiast. "Did you hear about Grigsby's auto?" said one keen motorist to another. "It ran away with him, went over an embankment, turned a somersault, hit a tree, killed Grigsby, and wasn't injured a particle!" "Gad! That's a beauty," was the answer. "What make is it?" Our artist has recorded the actual scene of this little passage of humour, while an old farmer in the distance tries to pry a "stalled" motor-car out of the ruts.

that these jokes, by constant repetition, may bring the motorist to a better sense of his responsibilities. It is not cavalier-like to get personal pleasure at the expense of danger to others. What a hard-hitting comment on excessive speed is the little jesting dialogue that follows: "See that man with the hard face? He's killed his man." "Indeed! Chauffeur or motorman?"

If our pictures may be said to show anything, they show the joys of motoring as well as the mortifications. Life is after all a series of ups and downs, with a certain percentage of the population travelling along a straight and narrow path, and auto-

Another of the joys of motoring is shown in our picture below, which, the artist



THE JOYS OF MOTORING.—No, this is not a dreadful accident. He is simply tightening a nut or something, and she is hoping he won't be much longer.

DRAWN BY L. RAVEN HILL. REPRODUCED BY PERMISSION OF THE PROPRIETORS OF "PUNCH."

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BROTHERS IN ADVERSITY.—Farmer: "Pull up, you fool! The mare's bolting!" Motorist: "So's the car!"
DRAWN BY L. RAVEN HILL. REPRODUCED BY PERMISSION OF THE PROPRIETORS OF "PUNCH."

assures us, does not depict a dreadful accident. The gentleman with the very obvious pair of legs is "simply tightening a nut or something," while the eternal woman, as the foreigner says, stands by "hoping he won't be much longer." To find yourself and your fair company on a lonely turnpike as evening comes on is indeed a joy.

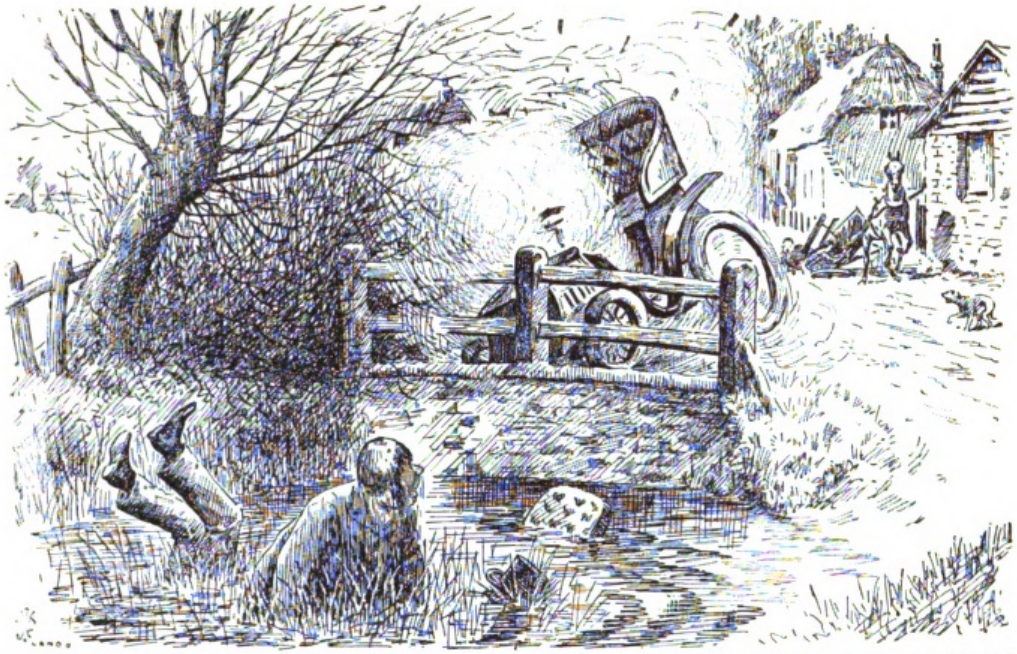
Sometimes you can't stop when you want to. "Pull up, you fool!" cries the farmer in our picture, "the mare's bolting!" "So's the car!" cries the brother in adversity, as his motor-car violently bumps along with imminent danger to himself, his property, and the neighbouring fence.

The private and pointed opinions of some motorists upon countries through which they have passed, if these opinions were collected, would form many volumes of interesting reading. It is one thing to spin along a straight road in a perfect working car, but it is another thing to get into a hilly country when your gasolene gives out. Gasolene cars, by the way, are not so good for hill-climbing as steam automobiles, but if you use gasolene and you are in difficulty you can always depend upon your mechanic to help you out. One of the *Punch* artists, who may have had experience of the country, gives us a glimpse of the trouble in Morocco which awaits the motorist. The car, no doubt, makes a deep impression wherever it goes, but Alfonso has to pay the piper for his employer's fun. Seriously, the French, who have done much touring in their possessions, coveted and otherwise, on the shores of the Mediterranean, agree that Morocco is a country which motorists should leave to politicians and other sportsmen.



DIARY OF AN AUTOMOBILIST ABROAD.—"Tangier, Friday.—Our car makes a deep impression in Morocco. Alfonso, my mechanic, who accompanies me, thinks it is not a good country for motoring."
DRAWN BY G. D. ARMOUR. REPRODUCED BY PERMISSION OF THE PROPRIETORS OF "PUNCH."

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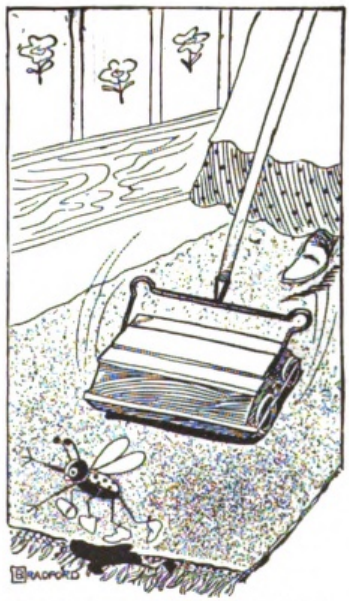


Motorist (a novice) has been giving Chairman of local Urban Council a practical demonstration of the ease with which a motor-car can be controlled when travelling at a high rate.

DRAWN BY G. H. JALLAND. REPRODUCED BY PERMISSION OF THE PROPRIETORS OF "PUNCH."

To the general public — and in this category may be included those penniless or superior-minded individuals who own not, or do not care to own, a motor-car, as well as those whom seductive advertisements describe as "being about to purchase"— automobilism presents many peculiar and varying phases. The husband in the following story belonged to the penniless, and therefore sceptical, class. "I dreamed last night," said his wife, "that you had given me an automobile." "H'm, yes," answered the knowing one, "you must have had a horse-less nightmare; and, by the way, my dear, dreams usually go by contraries!" Another good wife remarked to her spouse, "You seem pleased that my doctor recommended a five-mile walk." "Yes, my dear," was the reply, "I was afraid he would recommend an automobile."

The urban councils, which for many months have had under consideration the question of speed, will hardly be convinced of the ease with which a motor-car can be controlled when travelling at a high rate by the practical demonstration given in one of our pictures. It is to be noted that the motorist who has been plunged suddenly over a fence into a stream, top-hat and all, has been designated a novice by the draughtsman. This particular accident has, however, happened in the best-regulated motoring families, and it usually happens to a gasolene car if you yourself drive an electric, or to an electric if you yourself swear by gasolene. At all events, this sort of accident invariably happens to the other fellow, and if it does happen to you, you either keep quiet about it or pay the artist not to put you in a picture. There is such widespread and well-founded fear amongst automobilists regarding a sudden surprise of this sort, either because it develops the automobile face or kills you entirely, that it is sometimes a wonder why so many people have been found ready to take the risk. The attitude of the public regarding the perils of automobilism is well and humorously shown by the accompanying picture of the fly and the carpet-sweeper.



"Hi! Here comes an automobile!"

DRAWN FOR "LIFE."

We desire to thank Messrs. James Henderson and Son, of Red Lion Court, Fleet Street, for permission to reproduce the *Puck*, *Judge*, and *Life* drawings which we have selected from their publication, "Pictorial Comedy."

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Lost Tommy Jepps

BY ARTHUR MORRISON.

I.

AT Stratford Main Railway Station there are about half-a-dozen platforms, with stairs and an underground passage to join them; and on Bank Holiday all these platforms, as well as the stairs and the passage and the booking-offices, are packed so closely with excited people that there seems to be no room for one single walking-stick more, even a thin one. The fortunate persons in front stick to the edge of the platform somehow by their heels, in defiance of all natural laws. When a train arrives, the people in the booking-office rush at the passage, the people in the passage rush at the stairs, the people on the stairs rush at the platform, and nothing seems left for the people on the platform but slaughter and destruction, beginning with the equilibrists at the edge. And yet nobody gets killed. Half the people seem to be on the wrong platforms, but are wholly unable to struggle through to the right ones; and I believe the other half are on the wrong platforms too, but don't know it. And yet everybody seems to get somewhere, eventually.

Jepps's family party was one of a hundred others in Stratford Station, and in most respects very like ninety-five of them at least. There was Thomas Jepps himself, head of the family by courtesy, but now struggling patiently at its tail, carrying the baby always, and sometimes also carrying Bobby, aged four. There was Mrs. Jepps, warm and short of temper; there were Aunt Susan, rather stout, and Cousin Jane, rather thin; and there was Cousin Jane's sister's young man's aunt, warmer than 'Tilda Jepps and stouter than Aunt Susan, and perpetually losing something, or losing herself, or getting into original difficulties in the crowd. And then, beside the baby and Bobby, there were Tommy and Polly, whose ages were eight and five respectively, though it was Polly who tyrannized. It was the way of this small woman to rate her bigger brother in imitation of her mother's manner; and Tommy, who had the makings of a philosopher, was, as a rule, moodily indifferent to the scolding of both, so long as he judged himself beyond the radius of his mother's arm and hand.

"What 'a' you bin an' done with the tickets now?" demanded Mrs. Jepps of her husband in the midst of the wrestle in the booking-office.

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"Me?" asked Jepps, innocently, from behind the baby's frills. "Me? I—I dunno. Ain't you got 'em?"

"Yes," piped Tommy, partly visible beneath the capacious lunch-bag of Cousin Jane's sister's young man's aunt. "Yes, mother's got 'em!"

"You look after your little brother an' don't go contradictin' me!" snapped Mrs. Jepps. "Of course I ain't got 'em," she went on to Jepps. "You've bin an' lost 'em, that's what you've done!"

"Don't contradict mother," Polly echoed, pragmatically, to her wicked brother. "You be a good boy an' look after Bobby. That's what you've got to do. Ain't it, mother?"

"Oh, don't worrit me!" answered the distracted parent. "Where's them tickets? Did he give 'em to you, Aunt Susan?"

Aunt Susan hadn't seen them, and passed the question on to Cousin Jane. Cousin Jane, with a reproachful look at the unhappy Jepps, declared that he had never given them to *her*, whatever he might say or fancy; and her sister's young man's aunt gasped and stared and swayed in the crowd, and disclaimed all knowledge of the tickets; also she announced that whatever had become of them she expected to be taken to Southend, and that whatever happened she wasn't going to pay again. Poor Jepps defended himself weakly, but he was generally held to have spoiled the day's pleasure at the beginning. "I think you've got 'em, really, 'Tilda," he protested; "look in your purse!"

"Yes," piped Tommy once more, this time from behind Aunt Susan; "I see mother put 'em in her purse!"

Mrs. Jepps's plunge at Tommy was interrupted by Jepps. "You might look, at least," he pleaded.

"Look!" she retorted, tearing open her bag and snatching the purse from within. "Look yourself, if you won't believe your own wife!" She spread the purse wide, and displayed—the tickets; all in a bunch, whole tickets and halves mixed together.

"He'd better not let me get hold of him," said Mrs. Jepps, a moment later, nodding fiercely at Tommy. "Aggravatin' little wretch! He'll drive me mad one o' these days, that's what he'll do!"

With that the family was borne full drive against the barrier, and struggled and tumbled through the gate, mingled with stray members of other parties; all to an accompaniment of sad official confusion in the matter of what ticket belonged to which. But there was no easy rallying in the subway. The crowd pressed on, and presently Cousin Jane's sister's young man's aunt got into a novel complication by reason of her umbrella (which she grasped desperately in the middle) somehow drifting away horizontally into the crowd at her full arm's length, so that in a moment she was carried irresistibly up the first steps of the wrong staircase, clinging to her property with might and main, trailing her lunch-bag behind her, and expostulating with much clamour. Jepps, with the baby, watched her helplessly; but Tommy, ducking and dodging among the legs of the crowd, got ahead of her, twisted the umbrella into a vertical position, and, so releasing it, ducked and dodged back again. Cousin Jane's sister's young man's aunt was very angry, and the crowd disregarded her scolding altogether—laughed at it, in fact; so that Tommy, scrambling back triumphantly through the crush, came very handy for it.

"If I was yer mother I'd give you a good sound hidin', that's what *I'd* do," said Cousin Jane's sister's young man's aunt.

Tommy began to feel resentful, philosopher as he was. And when his mother, having with difficulty been convinced that the staircase she insisted on was another wrong one, and that the one advised by Tommy was right, forthwith promised him one for himself when she got him home, he grew wholly embittered, while his sister Polly openly triumphed over him. And so, with a few more struggles and family separations (Cousin Jane's sister's young man's aunt was lost and recovered twice), the party at length found itself opposite an open third-class carriage door, and climbed in with all the speed it might.

"Ah, well," said Aunt Susan, "here we are at last, an' no more bother till we get to Southend, any'ow."

"There'll be a lot afore you get there in this train, mum," observed a cynical coster, who had been greatly impressed—on the toes—by Aunt Susan's weight.

"What!" exclaimed Cousin Jane; "this is the Southend train, ain't it?"

"No, mum," replied the coster, calmly; "it ain't."

Mrs. Jepps caught at the door, but it was too late. The train was gathering speed, and in a few seconds it was out of the station. "There," said Mrs. Jepps, desperately, "I knew it was the wrong platform!"

"Then you was wrong again, mum," pursued the sardonic coster; "'cos it was the right 'un. But this 'ere's the wrong train."

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"'WHAT! EXCLAIMED COUSIN JANE; 'THIS IS THE SOUTHEND TRAIN, AIN'T IT?'"

"Mother!" squeaked Polly, viciously, "Tommy says—go away, I *will* tell—Tommy says he knew it was the wrong train when we got in."

"What! You young—you didn't! How did you know?"

"Read it on the board," said Tommy, sulkily. "Board in front of the engine. C.O.L, Col, C.H.E.S.T.-chest, E——"

"Take him away, somebody," yelped Mrs. Jepps. "Take the little imp out o' my sight or I'll kill him—I know I shall! Knew it was the wrong train an' let us get in! I—oh!"

"Why," pleaded Tommy, in doleful bewilderment, "when I told you about the tickets you said I was drivin' you mad, an' when I told you about the platform you said you'd whop me when you got me home, an' now 'cos I didn't tell you about the train——"

"He's a saucy young varmint, that's what *he* is," interrupted Cousin Jane's sister's young man's aunt, whose misfortunes were telling on her temper as well as reddening her face. "Lucky for him he ain't a child o' mine, that's all. I'd show him!"

"So would I!" added Cousin Jane.

"He's a perfect noosance to bring out," said Aunt Susan; "that's what he is!"

"You're a naughty, wicked boy, Tommy!" said his superior little sister.

Tommy's spirits sank to the lowest stage of dejection. There was no understanding these grown-up people and no pleasing them. They were all on to him except his father, and even he seemed sadly grieved, in his mild fashion.

The cynical coster had been chuckling in a quiet, asthmatic sort of way, rather as though some small but active animal was struggling in his chest. Now he spoke again.

"It's all right, mum," he said. "Don't be rough on the kid. You can change at Shenfield, jest as good as if you come in the right train all the way."

This was better, and the spirits of the party rose accordingly; though their relief was balanced by a feeling of undignified stultification.

"Givin' us all a fright for nothing," said Aunt Susan, with an acid glare at the unhappy Tommy. "It's a pity some children ain't taught to keep their mouths shut!"

"Why, so I did, an' mother said she'd——"

"Be quiet, now!" interrupted Mrs. Jepps. "Be quiet! You've done quite enough mischief with your clatter. Catch me bringing you out again on a holiday, that's all!"

And so for the rest of the journey Tommy remained in the lowest depths of despondency; never exhibiting the smallest sign of rising to the surface without being instantly shoved down again by a reproof from somebody.

The cynical coster got out at Romford,

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with another asthmatic chuckle and an undisguised wink at Tommy. The train jogged along through Harold Wood and Brentwood to Shenfield Junction, and there the party found the Southend train at last. With the people already there they more than filled the compartment, and Tommy had to stand, a distinction which cost him some discomfort; for when he stood by the door he was blamed for interfering with Polly's and Bobby's enjoyment of the landscape, and when he moved up the carriage his efforts to maintain his equilibrium seriously disturbed the repose of Aunt Susan's corns.

The day was bright, and Southend was crowded thick everywhere with holiday-makers. Mrs. Jepps rallied her party and adjured Tommy. "Now you, Tommy, see if you can't begin to behave yourself, an' take care of your little brother an' sister. S'pose a man was to come and take *them* away! Then I s'pose you'd wish you'd been a better boy, when it was too late!"

"I'd make him wish it a quicker way than that!" said Cousin Jane's sister's young man's aunt, spitefully; for she had not yet got over her earlier misfortunes.

As the words left her mouth a horrible squeak rent her ears, and a long pink "trunk"—one of those paper tubes which, when blown, extend suddenly to a yard long and as suddenly retreat into a little curl—shot over her shoulder into her eye, and was gone again. With a gasp and a bounce she let go umbrella and lunch-bag together; and, while a grinning boy went dancing and trumpeting away in the crowd, a trickle of fragrant liquor, which would have smelt much the same if it had been gin, issued from the lunch-bag and wandered across the pavement. And Tommy Jepps, startled in the depth of his gloom, hastily stuffed his fist against his mouth, and spluttered irrepressibly over the knuckles. For indeed in his present state of exasperation Tommy had little sympathy for the misfortunes of so very distant a relation as Cousin Jane's sister's young man's aunt.



"WITH A GASP AND A BOUNCE SHE LET GO UMBRELLA AND LUNCH-BAG TOGETHER."

Tommy's father was mildly horrified, and murmured deprecatingly from among the baby's frills. "Tommy!" he said, in an awe-struck whisper. "Tommy! Nothing to laugh at!"

"Get out o' my sight," cried Mrs. Jepps, making a miss at Tommy's head with her own bag. "Get out of my sight before I——"

Tommy got out of it with all possible celerity, and took his place in the extreme rear of the procession which formed as soon as the lunch-bag had been recovered and cleared of broken glass. The procession, with a score of others like it, went straggling along the High Street towards the beach, where the crowd was thicker than ever.

There were large open spaces, with shows, and swings, and roundabouts, and stalls, and cocoa-nut shies, and among these the Jepps column wound its way, closing up and stopping here and tailing out lengthily there. It stopped for a moment before a shooting-gallery, and then lengthened out in the direction of a band of niggers; arrived opposite the niggers it closed up once more, and Mrs. Jepps looked about to survey her forces. There was Jepps, perspiring freely under the burden of the baby, for the day was growing hot; there were Aunt Susan, Cousin Jane, and Cousin Jane's sister's young man's aunt, whose shorter name was Mrs. Lunn, red and ruffled; there were Polly and Bobby; but—Mrs. Jepps gave a second glance round before she would believe it—there was *not* Tommy.

Mrs. Jepps's chin dropped suddenly, and she began darting and dodging, looking this

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way and that, among the crowd. "Tommy!" she cried, "You Tommy!" with a voice still a little angry, but mainly anxious. "Mercy on us, where's the child gone?"

Jepps came back, with blank alarm on so much of his face as was visible above the baby and its clothes, and the rest of the party started dodging also. But all to no purpose. Their calls were drowned in the general hubbub, and their questings to and fro were fruitless; Tommy was lost!

"Oh! my child!" cried Mrs. Jepps; "my lovely, darling boy! What shall I do? He's lost! He's been stole! The best child as ever was!"

"Such a little dear!" said Cousin Jane.

"Such a jool of a duck!" said Aunt Susan, affected almost to tears.

"Oh, oh!" gasped Mrs Jepps, with signs of flopping and fainting; "an'—an'—you called him a noosance!"

"An' you called him an imp!" retorted Aunt Susan. "You should ha' treated him better when you had him."

"If he was a child of mine," said Cousin Jane's sister's young man's aunt, sententiously, "I'd ha' been a little more patient with him."

Jepps was off to the nearest stall to ask the stall-keeper if he had seen a boy. It seemed that the stall-keeper had seen a good many boys that morning. But had he seen Jepps's own boy? This conundrum the stall-keeper gave up without hesitation.

But Jepps's example did something, and presently the whole party scattered for the hunt. Jepps was left with the baby in his arms and the other two children about his knees, and he had strict orders not to lose any of them nor to wander far from a certain indicated point, near which the rest of the party might find him on occasion. He was not allowed to join in the search because somebody must take care of the children and Mrs. Jepps felt that she would die of suspense if condemned to wait inactive.

Mrs. Jepps was anything but inactive, and the other ladies were as busy as Mrs. Jepps. Before they separated they seized on a wandering apple-woman, who was confused and badgered into a cloudy admission that she *had* seen a boy with a man somewhere a little while ago, or perhaps rather before that, and, her replies being considered evasive, she was unanimously suspected of complicity.

It speedily grew apparent that small boys with men, together with small boys plain, were rather numerous in the many crowds; and one mistaken pursuit followed another for a sad long time, while Aunt Susan narrowly escaped a visit to the police-station on a charge preferred by the indignant parent of a child whom she chased and seized violently from behind, because of a supposed resemblance to Tommy when viewed from that aspect.

So it came to pass that, Aunt Susan having rejoined Mrs. Jepps, the two, fatigued and a trifle hysterical, returned to where they had left Jepps. As they turned the last corner, a red-headed man, with his hat in his hand, came running past them and vanished in the crowd, while they almost immediately perceived Jepps in the distance striving his utmost to raise a gallop, while Polly and Bobby hung to his coat-tails, and the baby tumbled and struggled in his arms.



"STOP HIM!"

"Stop him!" cried Jepps, choking with the breathlessness of his trot and the flapping of the baby's cape over his mouth. "Stop him! It's him! He's stole my——"

"The villain!" cried Mrs. Jepps, turning and charging the crowd. "Stop him! He's stole my child!"

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"Stop him!" gasped Jepps again. "He snatched my——"

But Mrs. Jepps and Aunt Susan were deep in the crowd, chasing and grabbing this time at red-headed men. Red-headed men, however, were scarce in that particular corner just at the moment, and the scarcest of all was the particular red-headed man who had rushed past them.

Jepps, gasping still, came up with his wife and Aunt Susan in the midst of a knot of people, answering the inquiries of curious sympathizers as he came along.

"Was it a good 'un?" asked another family man, with another baby in his arms, just as Jepps reached his wife.

"Yes," answered Jepps, "a real good 'un!"

"The best in the world!" sobbed Mrs. Jepps.

"I won it in a raffle," Jepps added.

"What?" cried Aunt Susan, "won it in a raffle? What do you mean? Is this a time for sich jokes, Thomas?"

"Jokes?" bleated poor Jepps. "It ain't no joke! He stole my watch, I tell you! Snatched it while I was a-trying to keep baby quiet!"

"Your watch!" Mrs. Jepps exclaimed. "Your watch! Thomas Jepps, you ain't fit to be trusted neither with a watch nor a family, you ain't!"

II.

TOMMY had lagged behind a little at the rifle-gallery, a place where you shot into a sort of tunnel with a target at the other end. The tunnels — there were four of them — interested him deeply, and he walked round to the side of the establishment to see how they were built. They were long, tapering metal tubes, it seemed, painted red. Tommy walked along to the very end, hoping to see something of the target mechanism, but that was boxed in. Here, at some little distance from where his wandering started, his attention was arrested by a man in a little crowd, who offered to eat a lighted newspaper for the small subscription of two shillings. It seemed to Tommy that so handsome an offer must be closed with at once, so he pushed into the crowd.

And that was how Tommy Jepps was lost. For each individual member of that crowd agreed with Tommy, feeling convinced that some of the others would be sure to subscribe so reasonable a sum without delay, so that the subscription was a long time beginning. And when at last it did begin it grew so slowly that at last the champion fire-swallower of the world and elsewhere was fain to be content with eighteenpence, at which very reasonable sum his contract was completed. Having witnessed this, Tommy's eyeballs retired to their normal place in his head, and his mouth, which had been wider open than the fire-swallower's, closed slowly. The crowd opened out, and Tommy, who had been effectually buried in it for half an hour, awoke to the realization that the rest of his party were nowhere to be seen.

For the moment it seemed a rather serious thing. Then, with a pause of reflection, he saw his misfortune in quite another light. He looked cautiously about him, and, after a little more consideration, he resolved that he would not be found—just yet, at any rate. He had enjoyed the society of his family for some time, and he resolved on a temporary change.

Tommy was not only a philosopher, but a sagacious boy of business. He had come out for a day's pleasure, but he must attend to business first; and one piece of business must needs be transacted to make things quite secure. So he started off back to the railway-station, keeping a wary eye for his relations as he went.

The station was just a little less crowded now, though it was busy enough still. Tommy had not quite settled how, exactly, he should set about his business, but he kept his eyes open and looked out for a friend. Grown-up people, as a rule, were difficult to negotiate with; you never could tell for certain what they would do or say next, and it was apt to be something unpleasant when it came. But there was a sort of grown-up persons—Tommy could never have described them—who were quite excellent, and always behaved like bricks to boys. And they were not such a rare sort of people, either. So he kept watch for some person of this kind, resolved to ask help and advice. Presently he saw one—a stout, red-faced man in a staring tweed suit, with a big gold watch-chain. Several other stout men were with him, and they were all laughing and chuckling together at a joke one of them had made about half an hour before.

"Please, sir!" said Tommy, craning his neck up at the red-faced man.

"Eh! Halloa!" said the man, almost falling over him. "Well, young 'un, what's up?"

"Please, sir, will they give me another ticket home, and who ought I to go and ask for it?"

"Another ticket home? What for? Lost your own?"

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"No, sir—mother's got it. But I've lost mother."

"O—o—o—oh! Lost your mother, eh? Well, would you know your way home if you had the ticket?"

"Yes, sir. But"—this with a sudden apprehension—"but I don't want to go home yet."

"No? Why not?"

"I come out to have a holiday, sir."

"Stratford, sir."

"That's all right," said the loser, moving off with his hand in his pocket. "I was a bit rash. It might ha' been Manchester!"

"That's saved me one d," observed the red-faced man, spinning his shilling again, and dexterously transferring it to Tommy's startled palm. "You go an' buy the town, you desp'rit young rip! An' take care you don't go losing the last train!"



"PLEASE, SIR, WILL THEY GIVE ME ANOTHER TICKET HOME?"

The red face broadened into a wide grin, and some of the stout men laughed outright. "So you're goin' off on the spree all by yourself, are you?" said the red-faced man. "That's pluck. But if you go asking for another ticket they'll keep you in the office till your mother comes for you, or take you to the police-station. *That* wouldn't be much of a holiday, would it?"

Tommy was plainly dismayed at the idea, and at his doleful face several stout men laughed aloud. "Come, Perkins," said one, "it's only one and a penny, half single. I'll toss you who pays!"

"Done!" replied the red-faced man. "Sudden death—you call," and he spun a shilling.

"Heads!" called the challenger.

"Tails it is," was the answer. "You pay. What station, young 'un?"

Tommy was almost more amazed than delighted. This was magnificent—noble. As soon as he could, he began to think. It was plain that being lost had its advantages—decided advantages. Those stout men wouldn't have looked at him a second time in ordinary circumstances, but because he was lost—behold the shilling and the railway ticket! Here was a discovery: nothing less than a new principle in holiday-making. Get lost, and make your holiday self-supporting.

He did not buy the town, but began modestly with a penn'orth of bulls'-eyes, to stimulate thought. He sucked them pensively, and thought his hardest: thought so hard, indeed, that in his absence of mind he swallowed a bull's-eye prematurely, and stood staring, with a feeling as of a red-hot brick passing gradually through his chest, and an

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agonized effort to remember if he had heard of people dying through swallowing bulls'-eyes whole. The pain in the chest presently passed off, however, and he found himself staring at a woman with a basket of apples and oranges.

"Apples, three a penny," said the woman, enticingly. "Oranges, a ha'penny each. There's nice ripe 'uns, my dear!"

"I've lost my mother," replied Tommy, irrelevantly.

"Lost yer mother!" responded the woman, with much sympathy. "Why, I wonder if you're the little boy as I was asked about? Has yer father got pale whiskers an' a round 'at, an' a baby which knocks it off, an' yer mother an' three other ladies an' yer little brother an' sister?"

Tommy nodded—perhaps rather guiltily.

The woman swung her basket on her arm and gave him an energetic push on the shoulder. "You go straight along down there, my dear," she said, pointing, "an' then round to the left, an' yer father's waiting by the second turning. Don't forget! Here—have an apple!" And she thrust one into his hand. "And an orange," she added, impulsively, stuffing one into his jacket-pocket.

This was really very satisfactory. He had half expected the apple, but the orange was quite an extra—in fact, the whole contribution had been wrung from the honest apple-woman by the pathetic look occasioned by the swallowing of the bull's-eye. Tommy went off in the direction she indicated, but somehow made the mistake of turning to the right instead of to the left at the critical point, being much occupied with thought. For he was resolving to look, all day, as pathetic as could be expected of a boy with a holiday all to himself, and an entirely new invention to make it pay.

And, indeed, the invention paid very well. Tommy perambulated the crowded beach on a system of scouting devised for the occasion. He made a halt at each convenient booth or stand, and from behind it carefully reconnoitred the crowd in front. No doubt he was searching anxiously for his sorrowing relatives; but somehow, though he altogether failed to meet them, he never seemed disappointed.

And meantime, as I have said, the invention worked excellently. He did not always set it in motion by the mere crude statement that he had lost his mother—he led up to it. He asked people if they had seen her. In this way he procured a short sea voyage, by interesting the mother of an embarking family which did not quite fill the boat. He had his railway ticket, he explained, and could get home, but meantime he must make his holiday as best he might. That excellent family yielded a penny and a bun, as well as the experience in navigation. A similar family was good for a turn on a roundabout.

"Got no change," said the roundabout man, as roundabout men do. For it is their custom, if possible, to postpone giving change, in the hope of their patrons emerging from the machine too sick and giddy to remember it. "Got no change. I'll give it you when you come off."

"Not you," retorted paterfamilias, made cunning by experience. "You'll be too busy, or forget, or something. Here's a boy what's looking for his mother; we'll make up the tanner with him."

So the morning went; and Tommy acquired a high opinion of the generosity of his fellow-creatures, and a still higher one of his own diplomacy. Not that it always succeeded. It failed sometimes altogether. There was a cocoa-nut shy proprieter, for instance, whose conduct led Tommy to consider him a very worthless person indeed. He began by most cordially inviting Tommy to try his luck—called him a young sportsman, in fact. Tommy was much gratified, and selected a stick.

"Money first," said the man, extending a dirty palm.

"Lost my mother," replied Tommy, confidently, having come to regard this form of words as the equivalent of coin of the realm.

"What?" The man's face expressed furious amazement.

"Lost my mother," Tommy repeated, a little louder, surprised to find anybody so dull of comprehension.

"'Ere, get out!" roared the outraged tradesman, who was not educated to the point of regarding a cocoa-nut shy a necessity of life for a lost boy. "Get out!" And he snatched the stick with such energy that Tommy got out with no delay.

He was so far cast down by this ruffian's deplorable ignorance of the rules of the game that his next transaction was for cash.

He saw a man selling paper "trunks" of the sort that had so seriously startled Mrs. Lunn on the family's first arrival, and he greatly desired one for himself. But the trunk-merchant was an unpromising-looking person—looked, in fact, rather as though he might be the cocoa-nut man's brother. So

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Tommy paid his penny, and set out to amuse himself.

The toy was quite delightful for a while, and utterly confounded and dismayed many respectable persons. But after a little time it began to pall; chiefly, perhaps, because it interfered with business. If you wish to appeal to the pity of any lady or gentleman in the character of a lost child, it is not diplomatic to begin by blowing a squeaking paper "trunk" into that lady's or gentleman's face. It strikes the wrong note, so to speak: doesn't seem to lead up to the subject. So presently Tommy tired of the "trunk," and devised a new use for it. For he was a thrifty boy, and wasted nothing.

He looked about to find some suitable person to whom to offer the article for sale, and at length he fixed on a comfortable old lady and gentleman who were sitting on a newspaper spread on the sand, eating sandwiches. Now to the superficial it might seem that a stout and decorous old couple of about sixty-five years of age, and thirty-two stone total weight, were not precisely the most likely customers on Southend beach for such an implement as Tommy had to offer.



"PLEASE WOULD YOU LIKE TO BUY THAT?"

But Tommy was not superficial, and he knew his business.

"Please would you like to buy that?" he asked, looking as interesting and as timid as he could manage. "Only a ha'penny. It cost a penny."

"Why, bless the child!" cried the old lady; "we don't want a thing like that!" And the old gentleman sat speechless—partly because his mouth was full of sandwich.

"I've lost my mother," said Tommy.

For a moment more the old couple continued to stare, and then the old lady realized the pathos of the situation in a flash. Tommy suddenly found himself snatched into a sitting position beside her and kissed. And the next moment he was being fed with sandwiches.

"Poor little chap!" said the nice old lady. "Poor little chap! Lost his mother and tried to sell his toy to buy something to eat! Have another sandwich, my dear."

Tommy did not really need the sandwiches, having been eating a good deal all day, and being even now conscious of sundry pockets distended by an apple, a paper of bulls'-eyes, several biscuits, and a large piece of toffee. But he wished to be polite, so he ate as much as he could and answered the old lady's questions to the best of his ability. He told her his name, his age, where he lived, and what sums he could do. He assured her that he knew his way home and had his ticket safe; and he eased her mind wonderfully by his confidence that he could find his mother very soon, and particularly because of his absolute certainty of meeting her, at latest, at the railway-station. And finally, not without difficulty, he tore himself away, bearing with him not only the

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rejected "trunk," but also added wealth to the amount of fourpence.

He did very well with the "trunk"—very well indeed. He never got quite so much as fourpence again; but he got some pennies, one twopence, and several halfpennies. He continued to select his customers with care, and rarely made a mistake. Some selections were unfortunate and unproductive, however, but that he quite expected; and it surprised him to find what a number of benevolent persons, made liberal by a fine Bank Holiday, were ready to give a copper for a thing and then let him keep it. But he never fell into the inartistic error of offering his stock-in-trade to any person in the least likely to use it. Persons of sufficient age and dignity were easily to be found by a boy of discrimination, even on Southend beach.

But everything must come to an end at last, and so did the trunk. Having carefully observed a large, good-tempered-looking woman sitting under an umbrella, and having convinced himself that she was not likely to need a paper trunk for personal entertainment, he proceeded to business in the usual manner.

"Lost yer mother?" said the woman, affably. "All right, you'll soon find her. Here's yer ha'penny."

And with that this unscrupulous female actually *took* the trunk, and handed it over to some children who were playing hard by.

Tommy felt deeply injured. He had no idea those children were hers. It was shameful, he thought, to take advantage of a lost boy in such an unexpected fashion as that. And he had really begun quite to like that trunk, too.

But it had paid excellently, on the whole; and, at any rate, with his accumulated capital, he could make an excellent holiday for the rest of the day: to say nothing of what he might still come in for on the strength of his distressful situation.

So he went on combining business with pleasure, till he was driven to absolute flight by an excellent but over-zealous old gentleman who insisted on taking him to the police-station. It was a narrow squeak, and it was a most fortunate circumstance that the zealous old gentleman was wholly unable to run. As it was, the adventure so disconcerted Tommy that he concluded to relinquish business altogether for a time, and seek some secluded spot where he might at leisure transfer some of his accumulated commissariat from his bursting pockets to a more interior situation.

The cliffs at Southend, as you may know, are laid out as public gardens, traversed by precipitous paths, embushed with shrubs, and dotted with convenient seats. But Tommy did not want a seat. He was, in fact, a little tired of keeping a constant look-out, and since there were his own party, the apple-woman, whom he had espied in the distance twice since their first encounter, and the zealous old gentleman, all at large somewhere in Southend, he judged it safest to lie under a convenient bush, in some place commanding an interesting view, and there begin a leisurely picnic.

He found a capital bush, just behind one of the seats; a thick bush that no eye could penetrate from without, yet from between the twigs of which he had an excellent view of the sea and some part of the gardens. It was almost as good as a pirate's cave, which was very proper, for, on the whole, he felt something of a pirate himself to-day. He began his picnic with toffee.

Presently his attention was drawn to a man who came up the path with a very laboured air of casual indifference, although he was puffing visibly as he came, as if he had been running. He was a red-headed man, and, as he walked, he glanced anxiously over his shoulder. The seat before Tommy's retreat was empty, and the man threw himself upon it, so that his legs obstructed Tommy's view. And then, to Tommy's utter amazement, the man's hand came stealing out behind him into the bush, and there deposited on the ground, absolutely under Tommy's nose—two watches!

The hand was withdrawn as stealthily as it came, and the man began with some difficulty to whistle a tune. And now up the same path there came another man, plainly following the first: a tall, well-set-up man who walked like a policeman, which, indeed, was exactly what he was—a policeman in plain clothes.

"Well, Higgs," said the new-comer, suspiciously, "what's your game to-day?"

"Game?" whined the red-headed man, in an injured tone. "Why, no game at all, guv'nor, not to-day. Can't a bloke come out for a 'oliday?"

"Oh, of course," replied the other; "anybody can come out for a holiday. But there's some as does rum things on their holidays. I've got my eye on you, my fine feller!"

"S'elp me, guv'nor, it's all right," protested the red-headed man, rising and moving off a little way. "I'm on'y 'avin' a 'oliday,

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guv'nor! You can turn me over if you like!"

Now Tommy did not know that to turn a man over meant to search him, but he did not stop to wonder. For what occupied the whole of his attention now, even to the exclusion of the very toffee in his mouth, was the astounding fact that one of the watches was his own father's!

There was no mistake about it. There were initials on the silver case—not his father's initials, for, indeed, he had won the watch in a raffle; but Tommy knew the letters well enough. Plainly the man had stolen it; and, in fact, three links of a broken chain were still hanging to the bow; and Tommy knew the chain as well as he knew the watch.

Tommy was a boy of business, a philosopher, and a practical person. He knew nothing of the second watch, whether it was the red-headed man's or another's. But he did know that this with the broken chain was his father's—he had had it in his hands a hundred times. So with no more ado he put it in his trousers pocket, on top of the bag of bulls'-eyes, and then quietly withdrew from the bush, leaving the red-headed man and his enemy talking some yards away on the opposite side.



"YOU CAN TURN ME OVER IF YOU LIKE!"

"I can't go home without him!" cried Mrs. Jepps that evening in the booking-office of Southend Station. "My darling child! I can't! I can't!"

"But come an' ask the station-master," reasoned her husband. "He might ha' come here to see about gettin' home. We never thought o' that!"

A small boy, who had been mistakenly trying to weigh himself by clinging desperately to the arm of the machine used for luggage, let go as he recognised the voices, and came out of the dim corner, looking uncommonly bulky about the pockets.

"Halloa, mother!" said Tommy, "I've been waiting for you since—well, I've been waiting a long time!"

This time Mrs. Jepps really did faint. But it was not for long. When she came to herself, with water from the waiting-room bottle in her hair and down her back, she recovered her customary energy with surprising rapidity. "Tommy, you wicked, ungrateful little wretch!" she said; "a nice holiday you've made o' this for me! Wait till I get you home, that's all!"

"Why, Tommy," said his father, "wasn't there no party as stole you, after all?"

"I don't believe parties steal boys at all," said Tommy; "but parties steal watches." And with that he hauled out what Jepps had never expected to see again.

This phenomenon completed the demoralization of the party; it also dissipated the storm that was gathering about Tommy's head.

"Lawks, child!" cried all the ladies at once. And Cousin Jane's sister's young man's aunt clung for support to the nearest object, which was a porter.

"Come!" squeaked Tommy, with a new importance in his voice, rattling the money in his trousers pockets. "Got your tickets? Keep close to me, an' I'll show you the right train."

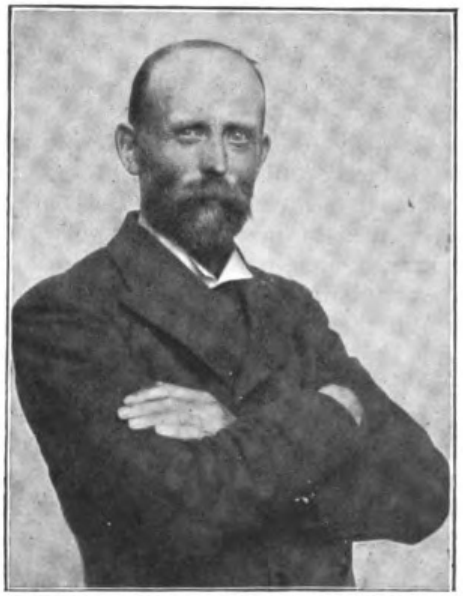
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The Tragedy of Martinique.

Being the complete personal narrative of Chief Officer Ellery S. Scott, of the Quebec liner ss. *Roraima*, which was destroyed by a volcanic rain of fire in the harbour of St. Pierre on the morning of May 8th, 1902.

WE left New York on Saturday, April 26th, aboard the Quebec Line steamship *Roraima*, Captain Muggah, bound for Demerara, *viâ* the Windward Islands. Our crew numbered forty-seven, and we had aboard twenty-one passengers, men, women, and children. It was Thursday, the 8th of May, that trouble came. When this day came in, overcast with partial clouds, we were lying at anchor off the Island of Dominica. At 1 a.m. we hove anchor and made a course south by east half-east for Martinique.

Everything went well till 4.45 a.m. I was on the bridge for the morning watch. The night was fair and the sea calm. Suddenly, without warning, we came into thick, heavy smoke and falling ashes, off the north-east end of the Island of Martinique. This disturbed me so much that I called the captain and asked what he thought of the weather. I had never seen an active eruption in the islands before, but years ago I saw Etna aflame, so I knew something about volcanoes, and of course we had every reason to suppose that the smoke and ashes were from Mount Pelée. The wind at this time was to the east of south, and the smoke from the mountain blew directly towards us.



CHIEF OFFICER E. S. SCOTT, OF THE "RORAIMA."
From a Photo. by Pach, N.Y.

We skirted the island, keeping about two miles off shore, but on account of the currents that were setting us in towards the land we had to steer various courses, sometimes drawing off and at others drawing in. The current was never steady. It ran terribly strong, and we took it for granted that this was due to some volcanic action going on. To a certain extent the captain and I were alarmed. It was a fine dust, a sharp, grey ash, that was falling. At 6.15 a.m. we anchored off St. Pierre.

The harbour-master and doctor soon came alongside and passed the ship. The next to come aboard were our company's agents, Messrs. Plessoneau and Testarte. The captain had a talk with them and asked whether they thought there was any danger from the volcano. Dense columns of smoke were then rising majestically from the peak of Mount Pelée and ascending towards heaven. But at this time it was perfectly clear over the harbour, for we were full five miles to the south of the mountain. The agents were very reassuring. There had been no damage done since the destruction of the sugar refinery a few days before, but Plessoneau and Testarte both said that a number of people wanted to get away to St. Lucia, and as we had a cargo for that port the captain asked me to go through the holds and find whether it were possible to get at the cargo for St. Lucia without first unloading the goods for Martinique. I found we should have to move a great deal of Martinique cargo, so Captain Muggah decided that it was wisest for us to stop where we were and discharge the cargo. The reason that we had not got to work on it earlier that morning was because, the 8th of May being Ascension Day, there were special services in all the churches of the city. Grand mass was being said at the cathedral, and the rich people had come over to St. Pierre to attend it. Labourers and everybody else were religiously inclined for that day.

The two agents had been to early mass, and as they had not broken their fast they requested something to eat, but would not stop for our regular breakfast as they were in a hurry to go aboard the *Roddam*, which had just steamed in, saying that as the *Roddam* was from Barbados, and the quarantine on Barbados had not been lifted at Martinique, they would not take our mail matter ashore with them, but would return for it later.

Meantime our sailors, under the boatswain, were cleaning up the sand and dust, which

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lay fully a quarter of an inch thick over everything—just like white sand. The ship was covered with it from end to end. It had sifted into everything. When the captain and I came off the bridge our uniforms were completely covered with it. Passengers and crew were gathering up the sand and ashes to keep as mementos. Some would put it in envelopes, others in tin tobacco-boxes, and I can remember a big negro giving me a cigar-box filled with it, which I took, little thinking what a plenty I should have of it before I made home again.

Meantime the officers were grouped forward on the deck enjoying the grand view of Pelée as huge volumes of smoke rose from it. The smoke appeared to roll right up into the heavens, and then southward and easterly winds drove it away to sea, so that where we were lying the air was comparatively clear. The sun was shining out nice and bright. Everything appeared to be pleasant and favourable except the column of black smoke.

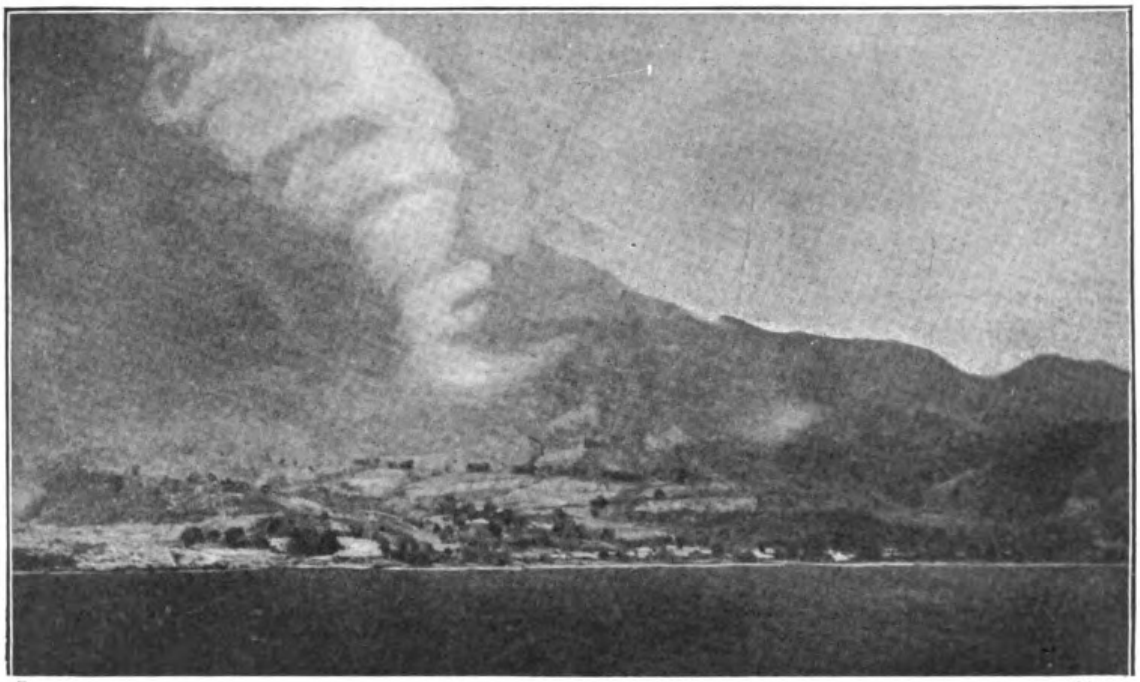
It was a few moments past 8 a.m. As we stood talking there the third mate said to me: "I must get my camera. I have only one more plate, but this is a sight that must not be missed." With this he turned and made for his cabin. I never saw him again. Just then, all at once, there was a sublime outburst from the mountain. Whether more than one crater opened it would be hard to say, but a conflagration came right out of the mountain in one grand burst, with a noise so terrible that beside it a thunder-clap would sound like a pistol-shot alongside the roar of a twelve-inch gun. Then it came rolling down the mountain over the intervening hills—the molten slag, flame, and smoke, one immense cloud of it, luminous, awful, rolling down like fire. It took just a moment. As it came sweeping down there seemed to be an inexhaustible supply following it, an endless tornado of steam and ashes and burning gas. The instant we saw this grand outbreak coming towards us the captain rushed to the bridge, calling to me to heave up anchor. I sprang forward to the steam windlass; the carpenter beside me was bending forward to start the machine going when destruction struck us.

The thing was indescribable. It seemed to whirl earth and sea before it, just as the western cyclones wipe up the trees and everything in their paths; but this was an explosive whirlwind, setting fire to everything as it went. It was only a few seconds of time, but as it rolled over the intervening miles towards the city that city was doomed. Lava, fire, ashes, smoke, everything combined, swept down on us in an instant. No railroad train could have escaped it. We could only see one side of the torrent, but more of it was pouring down the rear of the mountain, creating a tremendous back draught and increasing the fury about us still further.

Then came darkness blacker than night, and as the awful ruin struck the waters it just rolled along, setting fire to the shore and the ships. The *Roraima* rolled and careened far to port, then with a sudden jerk she went to starboard, plunging her lee rail far under water. The masts, smoke-stack, rigging, all were swept clean off and went by the board. The iron smoke-stack came off short, and the two steel masts broke off 2ft. above the deck, perfectly clean, without a jagged edge, just like a clay pipe-stem struck with a big stick. We had started to heave the anchor, but it never left the mud. There we were, stuck fast in hell. The darkness was something appalling. It enveloped everything, and was only broken by the burning clouds of consuming gas which gave bursts of light out of the darkness. The ship took fire in several places simultaneously, and men, women, and children were dead in a few seconds of time. This was a few minutes after eight o'clock.

The saloon and the after-end of the ship blazed up at once. The *Roraima* was lying with a heavy list to starboard, pointing towards the shore. Hot ashes fell thick at first. They were soon followed by a rain of small, hot stones, ranging all the way from the size of shot to pigeons' eggs. These would drop in the water with a hissing sound; but where they struck the ship's deck they did little damage, for the decks were protected with a thick coating of ashes from the first outburst. After the stones came a rain of hot mud, lava apparently mixed with water, of the consistency of very thin cement. Wherever it fell it formed a coating, clinging like glue, so that those who wore no caps it coated, making a complete cement mask right over their heads. For myself, when I saw the storm coming I snatched a tarpaulin cover off one of the ventilators and jammed it down over my head and neck, looking out through the opening. This saved me much, but even so my beard, face, nostrils, and eyes were so filled with the stuff that every few seconds I had to break it out of my eyes in order to see. This mud was not actually burning, but it steamed, and there

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From a] MOUNT PELÉE IN ERUPTION. *[Photo.*

was heat enough in it to dry on the head and form a crust so that it fitted like a plaster-cast.

I remember that Charles Thompson, the assistant purser, a fine-looking, burly black from St. Kitts, who stood beside me, had his head so weighted down with the stuff that he seemed to feel giddy and was almost falling. When he asked me to break the casing off his head I was afraid it would scalp him when I took it off. I could feel the heat on my own head very plainly through my tarpaulin covering, and his scalp must have been badly scorched.

Everybody was not on deck at this time. Some of the passengers were dressing, some still in their bunks. In some cases they were poisoned almost instantaneously by the noxious gas. In others they were drowned by the water which swept in hot through the open port-holes of the submerged state-rooms on the starboard side.

The darkness was appalling, only lit by the flames from the after-end of the ship and by the lurid glare of the conflagration on shore when some big warehouse caught fire, and the great puncheons of rum burst with a loud report and shot their blazing contents into the air. At this time I went to the lower bridge, feeling my way along, in order to find the captain. There on the bridge I almost stumbled on a crouching figure with a hideous face, burned almost beyond recognition.

"Who are you?" I cried, for I did not know him, crouched there in the darkness.

The man looked up, his face terrible to see.

"Mr. Scott," he said, "don't you know me?"

I said, "My God, it's the captain!"

He got on his feet as best he could. Then, seeing one of the boats still left which was hanging in a crippled condition, he wanted to know if we couldn't clear her away.

"Well, captain," I said, "the boat is stove in and no use, and she is jammed so that twenty men couldn't budge her, and we have got no one to help us."

Just then Benson, the carpenter, and Thompson, the third mate, came on the bridge. Thompson was scorched black, while Benson's principal burns seemed to be on his hands. The captain ordered that boat to be cleared away anyhow. With a knife I cut the forward davit tackle fall, but she wouldn't move. She was jammed. It was impossible to get her clear, and when he found that it was impossible the captain said, "Mr. Scott, jump overboard and save yourself."

"No, captain," said I, "I won't leave the ship."

"Well," said he, "find out how the ship is and what is the condition of our people. Find out how the women and children are."

After looking round and finding the after-end of the ship all on fire and people burned

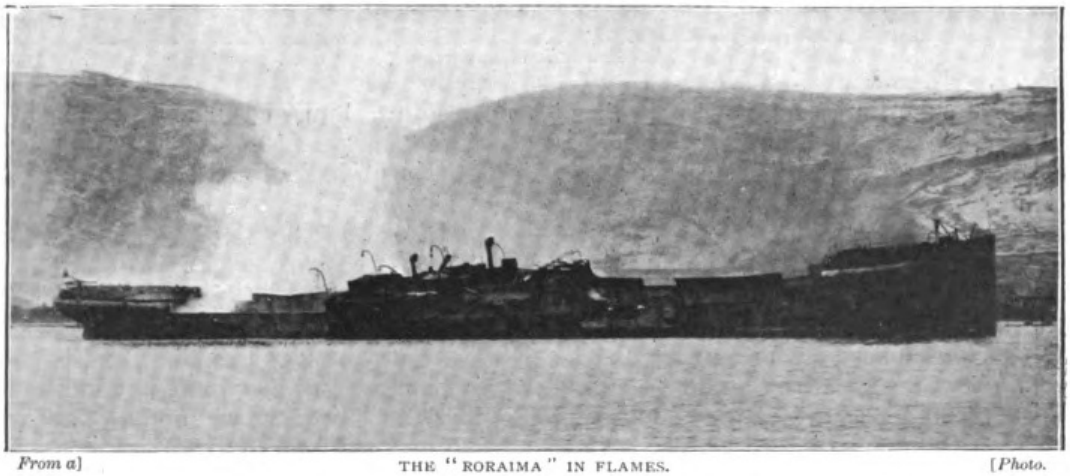
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and dying everywhere, and fire breaking out in several places forward, I went back to report to the captain how things were. When I reached the bridge he was gone. He had either fallen overboard or jumped to relieve his own sufferings, which must have been very terrible.

There were only four of us really able-bodied: Benson, the carpenter; Thompson, the assistant purser; a black labourer from St. Kitts, and myself. The men who helped us were horribly burned, but it was wonderful to see their heroism. Two engineers who had lost all the skin on their hands were still carrying things about to help us, using their upper arms and elbows. The command devolved upon me. The first thing to be done was to get the fires out forward (for the wind was blowing off shore and raking the ship) so that we should not be cremated alive.

thanked God. Part of the crew got the passengers—women and children—on the upper deck forward, hoping that the *Roddam* would come near enough to take them aboard.

All at once, not more than 100ft. away, she stopped. We said: "Well, perhaps she doesn't see us." I ran at once to the wheel-house and grabbed a handful of signal-lights. Two of them I found were blue lights and one the company's special signal. We set them off (they burned brightly, like fire-works), trying to attract the *Roddam's* attention and to show her that some living people were aboard, but to our horror the ship slowly backed out into the darkness, leaving us absolutely disheartened. When the others spoke about it to me I said: "She has only backed out of the line of smoke. She will come back again and take us off"; but after



From a] THE "RORAIMA" IN FLAMES. *[Photo.*

Fortunately the water was calm. It appeared as though the thick rain of mud had smoothed the water, but it still swirled and rolled past us, owing to the volcanic currents. The pumps were clogged and wouldn't work, but every man still able to walk did his best. Two of them began to lower buckets over the side, and then, forming a fire line, we passed them up forward and dashed the water at the flames. All this time thick darkness continued. Then all at once, about half-past eight, it lighted a little and we could see the steamer *Roddam* steaming straight towards us as though coming to take us off. We had no means of knowing at the time that she was almost as badly off as we were, for she had steerage-way and came up close enough for us to see that the forward part of her was all right. We took it for granted that she had been out of the line of fire. It looked like a rescue, and we

a while the wind veered south, the smoke cleared, and we could see nothing more of her.

This was about 8.45. How long we could stay afloat was the question. There was no time for deliberation. All of us who could rushed to the life-belts, which were distributed through the ship in various places, and we put them round every living soul aboard. When a mother had a child in her arms we would pass the preserver right round both of them together.

The next thing was to find out what condition our battered hull was in and to put out the small fires which had ignited again here and there. The worst one was in the port steerage, far forward. The women's quarters, as it happened, had been freshly cleaned and painted at Demerara, the mattresses were neatly piled inside, while the door was kept locked lest the crew should

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steal the beds. The starboard ports, however, were left open, and the volcanic fire sweeping in ignited the mattresses. We tried to open the door; but, finding it fast, several of us grasped a big plank and, making a battering-ram of it, smashed the door in. Two great piles of mattresses were all afire. It was a bad outlook, for if the fire gained headway there it would sweep the ship; and, worse than this, we had a matter of three thousand cases of kerosene oil, great kegs of varnish, and barrels of tar stowed away in the forward hold of the ship, not a dozen feet from where the fire was. Out on the deck, just over the steerage quarters, were the cattle-pens, which were used to store some 10,000ft. of spruce lumber—enough to burn a city—and standing about close by were a number of puncheons of temper lime, a highly inflammable substance used in the making of sugar. This temper lime, which takes fire if it comes in contact with water, was already smouldering, and the smoke was hanging thick about it.

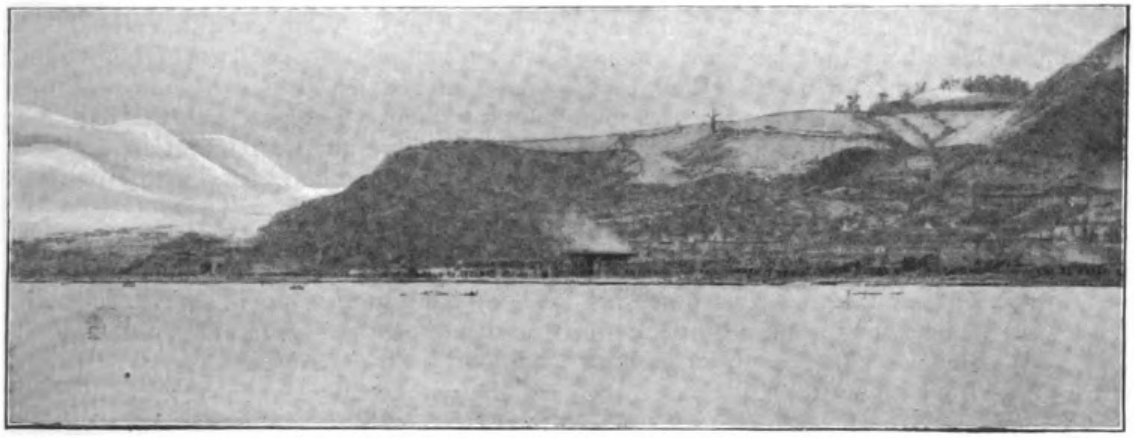
It was a bad fight, this at No. 2 hatch. Two of us lowered buckets over the side and hauled up water, while the others dashed it upon the mattresses. The water would quiet the flames for a moment, and then one of us would dash in, pull out a mattress, and throw it overboard. But the instant a smouldering mattress came into the current of air outside it would blaze up again, and it needed lively work to get one clear without being badly burned.

All this was exhausting work, but there was more to follow. We soon saw that the firemen's quarters on the starboard bow were breaking out in flames. We fought them hard and steadily and again dragged out the mattresses one by one, and more than once as we did so, out with the mattress would come the lifeless body of some messmate who had died trapped like a rat.

After a time all the smaller fires came under control, and we got a breathing spell so that we could look about us. The sight was fearful. All around us were sailors and passengers, men, women, and children, burnt and dying, crying aloud for water.

Thompson, the assistant purser, who was such a great help to me throughout the struggle, had an interesting story to tell afterwards. He had seen the ruin coming, but had time to fling himself through the open doorway of his state-room and close the door. The next instant the ship veered over, and water hot from the fire sweeping over it poured into his cabin until he was up to his neck; then the ship righted, the water receded, and Thompson struggled out on the starboard alley and came upon two women horribly burned and begging piteously for water. He rushed into a neighbouring state-room which was half-filled with water, and finding a can was about to try to fill it from the little tank of fresh water above the basin when he felt something soft beneath his foot. Looking down he saw the dead face of a man. Then hurrying out to the officers' mess-room he ran to the water-tank. Within it the water was thick and muddy and almost hot. Fortunately there was still a big cake of ice in it, and this he dumped into his bucket and carried it out to the unfortunates to cool their mouths.

Gradually we collected the survivors and laid them on deck forward near hatch No. 1, all of them crying for water, but many of the unfortunates could not drink at all. The flaming gases had burned their mouths and throats, and even the linings of their stomach, so terribly that in many cases the



From a] THE HARBOUR OF ST. PIERRE, SHOWING THE WRECK OF THE "RORAIMA." *[Photo.*

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passages of the throat were almost entirely closed, and many of the unhappy creatures could not drink at all. When we put the water into their mouths it stayed there and almost choked them, and we had to turn them over to get the water out, and still they would implore us for more. Fortunately the darkness was beginning to lift now, the flaming city supplying us with plenty of light. We broke open the ice-house door and hauled out blocks of ice and broke them into small pieces. These the sufferers could hold in their mouths when they could no longer drink. Several of them had their tongues burned out. The coatings of their mouths and tongues and the linings of their noses were in some instances entirely gone, so that the air when they attempted to draw breath would block their throat and nostrils and smother them.

All this time the groans and the shrieks of the sufferers were heart-breaking. You read about the rich man in the place of torment looking up and asking for water. Well, that is about as near as I can come to describing it, but everything that happened sticks in my mind like a nightmare. I can see now one of the passengers, a man, lying on the fo'c's'le deck, hideously scarred, crying for water. When we gave it to him he could not drink it. It would not pass down his throat. He was crawling around on deck on his hands and knees calling for water, and at last we were afraid he would fall overboard, so with the assistance of another man I brought him down to the main deck. As soon as ever he got there he caught sight of Thompson with his water-can and at once began to crawl after him for water, like a dog. Thompson kept giving him drink, but he could not swallow, and the only way to keep him from following around after the water-can was to attend to him and no one else, so the poor wretch had to be left. The man's tongue was literally burned out of his head. His arms were cruelly burned from his shoulders to his finger-ends. But the worst burns were internal. The fire did not seem to penetrate the clothing, but wherever the flesh was exposed it burned mercilessly.

I saw one little coffee-coloured baby fearfully scorched lying in the arms of a white nurse called Clara, who had come from New York with a family named Stokes. The child was in a dying condition, with its tongue lolling out of its mouth and the skin of the tongue all gone. There was still life in the little thing, and as Thompson came along he gave it some water, but it was no use. Clara's arms were badly burned, and at last she had to lay it down. When she did so the second engineer, Evans, picked it up and held it gently till it died in his arms. Then he laid it in one of the deck state-rooms. The door was open, so that we could all see it, and the sight was so pitiful that I went in and, shaking a pillow out of its case, put the little disfigured body inside and then laid it on the bed, so that it looked decent and Christian. I am thankful to say that Clara survived and went to the hospital. I think there is a very good prospect of her coming round again.

This same Clara helped us take care of Mrs. Stokes and her three children, two boys and a girl. The wretched woman's mouth could not open and her teeth were set. We took a small spoon and put some crushed ice between her teeth, and could hear her murmured thanks. Poor creature, she did not live long enough to see two of her children die. The elder boy died ten or fifteen minutes after. Later we got the baby (who was little more than an infant in arms) and the girl on the rescue boat, but the baby died before it reached land. These two children and a woman from Martinique were the only people who asked for anything to eat. Thompson found some in the store-room in the oven keeping warm. Every eatable outside had been destroyed.

The women behaved very well, though they were all terribly burned. One big coloured woman, for all her burns and scalds, kept singing hymns. Between the verses her cry was the same as the cry of everybody, "Give me water, water." As soon as she got a drink she seemed to revive, and then she would begin her singing again. The last hymn she sang was "Nearer, my God, to Thee," and then she died where she was sitting.

There was another woman, a Mrs. McAllister. Thompson, who was busy seeing after everybody, got a bed out of the men's quarters and set it down in the damp mud on deck so that she could rest there. She lay still for a while and then called Clara, the nurse-girl. "Won't you sing a couple of hymns for me," she said, "and offer a short prayer, for I am dying?" The nurse knelt right down there in the ashes and began to sing:—

Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in Thee.

We could only hear snatches of the hymn, for we had work to do, but in each lull we

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[From] VIEWS OF THE RUINS OF ST. PIERRE AFTER THE ERUPTION. [Photos.

could hear her sweet voice. She sang again: "Safe in the Arms of Jesus," and then, clasping her hands, looked up to heaven and offered a short prayer. Then Mrs. McAllister thanked her and bade her good-bye.

By this time the air was getting a little purer, so that it was possible to breathe. At that first fierce blast it was so strong and fiery that it struck men dead on the spot.

While Thompson and Thomas, a labourer, were trying to alleviate the sufferings of the dying, Benson, the carpenter, and I went through the different holds of the ship. We found the hull tight. What water was in her had come down her hatches when she first heeled over. We sounded under the ship and found twenty-five fathoms of water; then the second engineer reported that the engines and boiler were safe and that there was no danger of an explosion. The second and fourth engineers were seared with fresh scars, but they stayed at their posts to see that the boilers were safe before they left them. It was out of the question to get up steam, however, for there was no smoke-stack and consequently no draught, and if there had been there was nobody to keep the fires going. Besides, even if the ship had been able to steam off before the wind the flames in her stern would have swept her decks, instead of burning quietly at the after-end of her as she lay at anchor.

There was but one thing to do, so, with the assistance of those who could do anything at all, we started to construct a raft. First of all we lowered over the side two large skids full 18ft. long. Skids are long, solid planks bolted together with screw bolts and fitted to the outside of the ship's breast below the davits to prevent chafing when boats are lowered. Then two of us let ourselves down, and after lashing the skids firmly together the others passed down lumber from the stock in the cattle-pen, and these we spiked to the skids and made a raft secure and large enough to carry all who were living on board the ship. We counted the survivors over and found that we had twenty-four living persons on the ship.

All this took considerable time, and after we got the raft itself constructed the next thing was to get provisions for her. The *Roraima* carried four boats. Three had been destroyed and the fourth was jammed on the davits, but from her we got oars and rowlocks. We also passed down a compass, lanterns, cases of provisions, a can of oil, and kegs of water. We got everything ready in case the fire from the after-end of the ship drove us out before some other means of relief came to us.

It was between 2 and 3 p.m. that a French man-of-war, the *Suger*, Captain Pierre Le Bris, steamed into the harbour of St. Pierre.

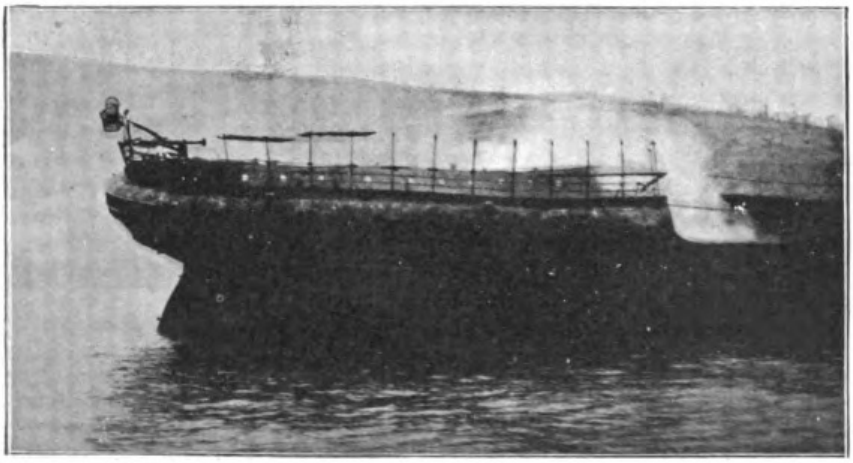
We saw her coming towards us, but after our experience with the *Roddam* I did not feel sure of anything. We got out the British ensign and, tying it bottom upward on a stick, lashed it on one of the port davits, that being the highest stick left on the ship.

The *Suger* at once answered the signal and sent a boat alongside. We were the first ship she noticed. No other ship was showing any special signals to attract her attention, and all we could make out of the craft about us were merely burning hulks. Soon she sent two other boats to our aid, towed by a steam launch. Gradually we got the passengers over the side on the raft, from which they could step more easily on to the boats. Those who were most helpless and maimed we lowered first, and those best able to help themselves were left until the last. After the passengers came the crew, then the officers. The second engineer went ahead, and I followed last. Just before I went over the side I caught sight of a solitary sheep,

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the last of thirty which had been swept overboard. The poor creature was bleating pitifully, so I went back and laid open its head with an axe, which seemed to me a mercy. We left behind us between twenty and thirty dead bodies, some lying about the deck, some in the fo'c's'le, some in their bunks, where they had been smothered at the first fearful burst of poisonous gas. My own poor boy was there somewhere. From the moment of the explosion I never saw him again. He was a likely young fellow, and used to say how some day he would have a ship of his own and would take me along as mate. As we went away some of the bodies looked so awful that we could not bear to look on them. The only thing I think of now is this: How did we ever come through it all and live to escape the mad-house?

At the time we left the ship she was afire from her stem to the aft engine-room bulkhead. As we looked back we saw a strange thing. A common reed chair, such as you often see on the deck of a Transatlantic liner, was hanging in the air to the ship's stern. It had been fastened to the after flag and braced below so that it hung off in space just beyond the reach of the flames. Some poor wretch had rigged it there and sat in it to save himself from fire, afraid to jump on account of the fierce rush of the volcanic currents below. We could see him there, sitting in his chair, long before we left the ship, at the back of the solid wall of fire which divided us from him, and he must have suffered terribly before he dropped from his perch and went overboard. We could not get at him on account of the fire in the forward part of the saloon, but a state-room was at hand close by, with plenty of lifebuoys, and he might have got one and put it on; but, strangely enough, after all that fire, there hung the empty chair literally intact. The next morning, the 9th, when the ship *Corona* steamed into the harbour of St. Pierre, the captain said that the chair was still hanging there unharmed.



THE STERN OF THE 'RORAIMA," SHOWING THE BASKET-CHAIR INTACT.
From a Photo.

When we were all taken aboard the warship the surgeon and his staff attended carefully to the worst cases, dressing their wounds and doing everything to alleviate their suffering. They also did everything possible for the comfort of those who were not in such a terrible condition. Meantime the man-of-war's launch steamed up as close to the city as possible, alongside the shore, which was a fiery furnace, and right at the water's edge they picked up a number of people, amongst others our third officer, Thompson, who had managed to swim ashore. There were also three others of our people there—one passenger and a couple of the crew.

The *Suger* then steamed slowly to Fort de France, her boats searching the shore and sea and picking up everybody they found alive. Wreckage and driftage were scattered everywhere over the water, and now and then you could see a plank with an arm or leg curled over it, while the remainder of the corpse was hidden beneath the surface, or, again, some body doubled over a spar, while the head and legs hung helplessly beneath the water.

At 9 p.m. she landed at the pier at Fort de France, where a number of stretchers carried up the wounded to the ambulances, which were in waiting at the head of the little wharf to take them to the hospitals.

I said that the last I saw of Captain Muggah was on the bridge in the first hideous moments of darkness. Later I heard more of him. It seems that just after I left him to work at the boats, Dan, the ship's cooper, a black labourer whom we had taken on at St. Kitts, saw him slip and fall overboard. The ship had a list, and her deck was covered with slippery mud, so his fall was probably accidental. But whether he jumped or not no man can say. If he did, in that mortal agony, who is

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there willing to blame him? Well, Dan saw the captain go, and catching up one of the hatches he leaped right after him, and striking out in the whirling current put the hatch under the captain's arm to help support him in the water. Then he struck out for shore, pushing his burden ahead of him, but there was such a tremendous current that he could make little headway, and gradually drifted alongside a burning hull which lay a few cables' length from the *Roraima*.

Some of the crew, who were frantic to escape, hauled him towards them and then threw over a booby-hatch, which Dan made fast to his own raft. Then the men tossed down some bedding, on which Dan laid the captain and one or two unfortunates from the other ship, who were lowered from the burning deck. Two or three sailors followed, and then all together they started the raft towards the shore, stopping every now and then to pick up some poor wretch floating in the water.

As they were paddling painfully along, using pieces of board for oars, they sighted a small boat, such as the natives of Martinique use, looking like a canoe with high sides. One of the sailors, a native, at once jumped overboard and swam to the boat. As soon as he climbed into her he started back towards the raft, but on his way he came across another Martinique man clinging to a spar. He took him aboard and then, since two of them could paddle the boat with ease, he suddenly lost interest in his companions on the raft, and right there, in plain sight of his messmates, he turned his boat and made off towards Fort de France.

This was too much for the crew of the raft. They lost their nerve. Dan, the cooper, did his best to make them drive their raft back to the ship, but they absolutely refused to return and made for the shore. Eventually they reached land, but just as they struck the shore Captain Muggah died. During all the hours on the raft he was more or less conscious, and in spite of his awful suffering he kept begging Dan not to go to the shore for safety, but to take him back to his ship. Try as he would, however, Dan could not induce the men to do this. No sooner had he landed than he got a stick of timber and started all alone to swim back to the ship. He reached the raft and brought me the news of Captain Muggah, and also of their officer, Thompson, who had reached the shore alive.

The whole of the survivors of the *Roraima*, four of them women, were taken aboard the *Suger*. Not all of them reached Fort de France alive. Some died on the way, others were dead before the next morning; how many I could not find out. On the morning of the 9th, when I tried to go to the hospitals, I could only secure a permit to enter one. There I came upon the second engineer and carpenter, the fourth engineer, the quartermaster, and two sailors. Two had died there during the night, one a fireman. Everything possible was being done for the poor fellows, but the doctor told me that the burns were all poisonous, and that wherever a scar was deep blood-poisoning set in.

A few days later our company's ship, the *Corona*, touched at Fort de France and took such of us aboard as were able to travel. On the 20th day of May I landed once more in New York.



From a] GENERAL VIEW OF ST. PIERRE AFTER THE ERUPTION. *[Photo.*

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THE PSAMMEAD.

or the GIFTS.

VI.—BIGGER THAN THE BAKER'S BOY.

IT all began with a fight that Robert had with the baker's boy, who was a large one, and very cheeky even for the size he was. Robert began it, it is true, by light-heartedly lassoing the baker's boy with a skipping-rope when they met him on their way to the sand-pit to get the day's wish from the psammead. But the baker's boy behaved in a most cowardly and ungentlemanly way. Instead of fighting with fists, he pulled Robert's hair and kicked him. However, he won, for Jane hung on to Cyril so that he couldn't help Robert without hurting her, and Anthea was poor-spirited enough to cling to the baker's boy and offer abject apologies in Robert's name. The fray ended in the boy's chasing Robert along the road down to the pit and kicking him into a heap of sand.

Cyril was angry with Jane. Robert was furious with Anthea. The girls were perfectly miserable, and nobody was pleased with the baker's boy. There was, as French authors say, "a silence full of emotion."

Then Robert dug his toes and his fingers into the sand and wriggled in his rage. "He'd better wait till I'm grown up—the cowardly brute. Beast—I hate him! But I'll pay him out. Just because he's bigger than me!"

"You began," said Jane, incautiously.

"I know I did, silly, but I was only rotting—and he kicked me—look here."

Robert tore down a stocking and showed a purple bruise touched up with red.

"I only wish I was bigger than him, that's all."

He dug his fingers in the sand and sprang up, for his hand had touched something furry. It was the psammead, of course. "On the look-out to make sillies of us, as usual," as Cyril remarked later. And, of course, the next moment Robert's wish was granted, and he was bigger than the baker's boy—oh, but much, much bigger. He was bigger than the big policeman who used to be at the crossing at the Mansion House years ago—the one who was so kind in helping ladies over the crossing—and he was the biggest man *I* have ever seen, as well as the kindest. No one had a foot-rule in their pocket, so Robert could not be measured; but he was taller than your father would be if he stood on your mother's head, which I am sure he would never be unkind enough to do. He must have been 10ft. or 11ft. high, and as broad as a boy of that height ought to be. His Norfolk suit had fortunately grown too, and now he stood up in it, with one of his enormous stockings turned down to show the gigantic bruise on his vast leg. Immense tears of fury still stood on his flushed giant face. He looked so surprised and he was so large to be wearing an Eton collar that the others could not help laughing.

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"The sammyadd's done us again," said Cyril.

"Not us—*me*," said Robert. "If you'd got any decent feeling you'd try to make it make you the same size. You've no idea how silly it feels," he added, thoughtlessly.



"'THE SAMMYADD'S DONE US AGAIN, SAID CYRIL."

"And I don't want to; I can jolly well see how silly it *looks*," Cyril was beginning, but Anthea said:—

"Oh, *don't!* I don't know what's the matter with you boys to-day. Look here, Squirrel, let's play fair; it is hateful for poor old Bobs, all alone up there. Let's ask the sammyadd for another wish, and if it will I do really think we ought to be made the same size."

The others agreed, but not gaily; but when they found the psammead it wouldn't.

"Not I," it said, crossly, rubbing its face with its feet. "He's a rude, violent boy, and it'll do him good to be the wrong size for a bit. What did he want to come digging me out with his nasty wet hands for? He's a perfect savage. A boy of the Stone Age would have had more sense."

Robert's hands had, indeed, been wet—with tears.

"Go away and leave me to get dry in peace, do," the psammead went on. "I can't think why you don't wish for something sensible — something to eat or drink, or good manners, or good tempers. Go along with you, do."

It almost snarled as it shook its whiskers, and turned a sulky brown back on them. The most hopeful felt that further parley was vain.

They turned again to the colossal Robert.

"Whatever shall we do?" they said, and they all said it.

"First," said Robert, grimly, "I'm going to reason with that baker's boy. I shall catch him at the end of the road."

"Don't hit a chap littler than yourself, old man," said Cyril.

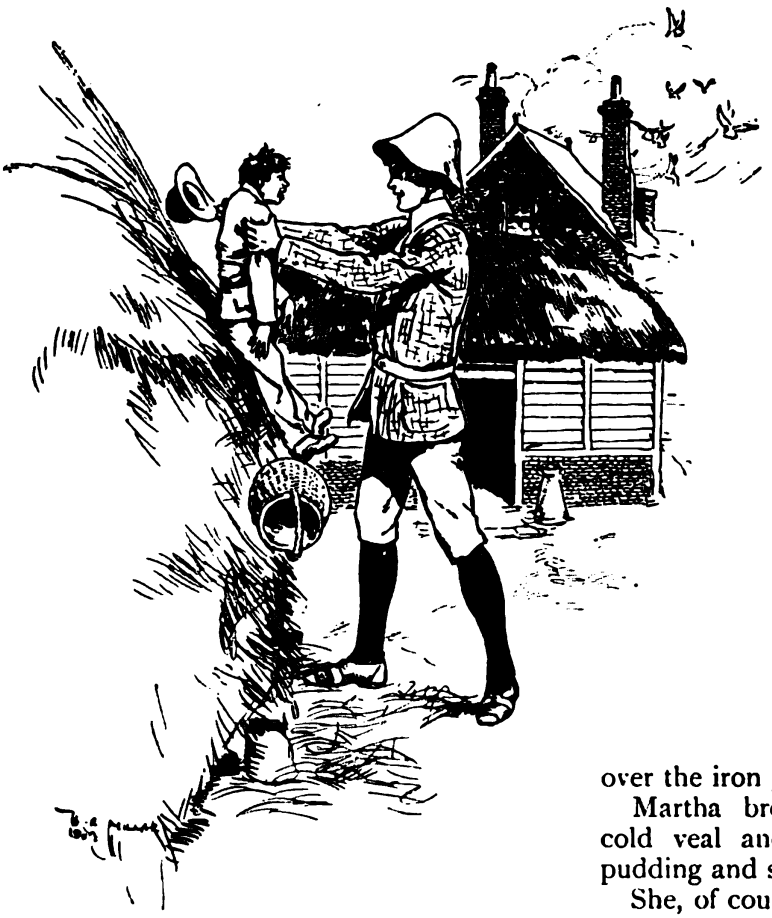
"Do I look like hitting him?" asked Robert, scornfully. "Why, I should *kill* him. But I'll give him something to remember. Wait till I pull up my stocking." He pulled up his stocking, which was as large as a small bolster-case, and strode off. His strides were 5ft. or 6ft. long, so that it was quite easy for him to be at the bottom of the hill ready to meet the baker's boy when he came down swinging the empty basket, to meet his master's cart which had been leaving bread at the cottages along the road.

Robert crouched behind a haystack in the farmyard that is at the corner, and when he heard the boy come whistling along he jumped out at him and caught him by the collar.

"Now," he said, and his voice was about four times its usual size, just as his body was four times its. "I'm going to teach you to kick boys smaller than you."

He lifted up the baker's boy and set him on the top of the haystack, which was about

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"HE LIFTED UP THE BAKER'S BOY AND SET HIM ON THE TOP OF THE HAYSTACK."

16ft. from the ground, and then he sat down on the roof of the cowshed and told the baker's boy exactly what he thought of him. I don't think the boy heard it all—he was in a sort of trance of terror. When Robert had said everything he could think of, and some things twice over, he shook the boy and said :—

"And now get down the best way you can," and left him.

I don't know how the baker's boy got down, but I do know that he missed the cart and got into the very hottest of hot water when he turned up at last at the bake-house. I am sorry for him, but, after all, it was quite right that he should be taught that English boys mustn't use their feet when they fight, but their fists. Of course, the water he got into only became hotter when he tried to tell his master about the boy he had licked, who had turned into a giant as high as a church, because no one could possibly believe such a tale as that. Next day the tale was believed—but that was too late to be any good to the baker's boy.

When Robert rejoined the others he found them in the garden. Anthea had thoughtfully asked Martha to let them have dinner out there, because the dining-room was rather small, and it would have been so awkward to have a brother the size of Robert in there. The Lamb, who had slept peacefully during the whole stormy morning, was now found to be sneezing, and Martha said he had a cold and would be better indoors.

"And really it's just as well," said Cyril, "for I don't believe he'd ever have stopped screaming if he'd once seen you the awful size you are!"

Robert was indeed what a draper would call an "outsize" in boys. He found himself able to step right over the iron gate into the front garden.

Martha brought out the dinner—it was cold veal and baked potatoes, with sago pudding and stewed plums to follow.

She, of course, did not notice that Robert was anything but the usual size, and she gave him as much meat and potatoes as usual and no more. You have no idea how small your usual helping of dinner looks when you are four times your proper size. Robert groaned and asked for more bread. But Martha would not go on giving more bread for ever. She was in a hurry because the keeper intended to call on his way to Benenhurst Fair, and she wished to be dressed smartly before he came.

"I wish *we* were going to the fair," said Robert.

"You can't go anywhere that size," said Cyril.

"Why not?" said Robert. "They have giants at fairs, much bigger ones than me."

"Not much, they don't," Cyril was beginning, when Jane screamed "Oh!" with such loud suddenness that they all thumped her on the back and asked whether she had swallowed a plum-stone.

"No," she said, breathless from being thumped, "it's not a plum-stone. It's an idea. Let's take Robert to the fair and get them to give us money for showing him! Then we really *shall* get something out of the old sammyadd, at last!"

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"Take me, indeed," said Robert, indignantly. "Much more likely me take you!"

And so it turned out. The idea appealed irresistibly to everyone but Robert, and even he was brought round by Anthea's suggestion that he should have a double share of any money they might make. There was a little old pony-trap in the coach-house—the kind that is called a governess-cart. It seemed desirable to get to the fair as quickly as possible, so Robert, who could now take enormous steps, and so go very fast indeed, consented to wheel the others in this. It was as easy to him, now, as wheeling the Lamb in the mail-cart had been in the morning. The Lamb's cold prevented his being of the party.

It was a strange sensation, being wheeled in a pony-carriage by a giant. Everyone enjoyed the journey except Robert and the few people they passed on the way. These mostly went into what looked like some kind of standing-up fits by the roadside. Just outside Benenhurst Robert hid in a barn, and the others went on to the fair.



"IT WAS A STRANGE SENSATION, BEING WHEELED IN A PONY-CARRIAGE BY A GIANT."

There were some swings, and a hooting-tooting, blaring merry-go-round, and a shooting-gallery, and cocoa-nut shies. Resisting an impulse to win a cocoa-nut—or, at least, to attempt the enterprise—Cyril went up to the woman who was loading little guns before the array of glass bottles on strings against a sheet of canvas.

"Here you are, little gentleman," she said. "Penny a shot."

"No, thank you," said Cyril. "We are here on business, not pleasure. Who's the master?"

"The what?"

"The master—the head—the boss of the show."

"Over there," she said, pointing to a stout man in a linen jacket who was sleeping in the sun; "but I don't advise you to wake him sudden. His temper's contrairy, especially these hot days. Better have a shot while you're waiting."

"It's rather important," said Cyril. "It'll be very profitable to him. I think he'll be sorry if we take it away."

"Oh, if it's money in his pocket," said the woman. "No kid, now. What is it?"

"It's a *giant*."

"You *are* kidding."

"Come along and see," said Anthea.

The woman looked doubtfully at them, then she called to a ragged little girl in striped stockings and a dingy white petticoat that came below her brown frock, and leaving her in charge of the "shooting-gallery" she turned to Anthea and said: "Well, hurry up. But if you *are* kidding you'd best say so. I'm as mild as milk myself, but my Bill, he's a fair terror, and——"

Anthea led the way to the barn. "It really *is* a giant," she said. "He's a giant little boy, in Norfolks like my brother's there. And we didn't bring him right up to the fair because people do stare so, and they seem to go into kind of standing-up fits when they see him. And we thought perhaps you'd like to show him and get pennies, and if you like to pay us something you can, only it'll have to be rather a lot because we promised him he should have a double share of whatever we made."

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The woman murmured something indistinct of which the children could only hear the words, "swelp me," "balmy," and "crumpet," which conveyed no definite idea to their minds.

She had taken Anthea's hand, and Anthea could not help wondering what would happen if Robert should have wandered off or turned his proper size during the interval. But she knew that the psammead's gifts really did seem to last till sunset, however inconvenient their lasting might be, and she did not think, somehow, that Robert would care to go out alone while he was that size.

When they reached the barn and Cyril called "Robert!" there was a stir among the loose hay, and Robert began to come out. His hand and arm came first; then a foot and leg. When the woman saw the hand she said, "My!" but when she saw the foot she said, "Upon my civvy!" And when, by slow and heavy degrees, the whole of Robert's enormous bulk was at last completely disclosed, she drew a long breath and began to say many things, compared with which "balmy" and "crumpet" seemed quite ordinary. She dropped into understandable English at last.

"What'll you take for him?" she said, excitedly. "Anything in reason. We'd have a special van built—leastways, I know where there's a second-hand one would do up handsome—what a baby elephant had as died. What'll you take? He's soft, ain't he? Them giants mostly is; but I never see—no, never. What'll you take? Down on the nail. We'll treat him like a king and give him first-rate grub and a doss fit for a bloomin' dook. He must be soft or he wouldn't need you kids to cart him about. What'll you take for him?"

"They won't take anything," said Robert, sternly. "I'm no more soft than you are—not so much, I shouldn't wonder. I'll come and be a show for to-day if you'll give me——"—he hesitated at the enormous price he was about to ask—"if you'll give me fifteen shillings."

"Done," said the woman, so quickly that Robert felt he had been unfair to himself, and wished he had asked for thirty. "Come on, now, and see my Bill, and we'll fix a price for the season. I dessay you might get as much as two quid a week reg'lar. Come on—and make yourself as small as you can, for gracious sake."

This was not very small, and a crowd gathered quickly, so that it was at the head of an enthusiastic procession that Robert entered the trampled meadow where the fair was held, and passed over the stubbly yellow, dusty grass to the door of the biggest tent. He crept in, and the woman went to call her Bill. He was the big sleeping man, and he did not seem at all pleased at being awakened. Cyril watching through a slit in the tent saw him scowl and shake a heavy fist and a sleepy head. Then the woman went on speaking very fast. Cyril heard "Strewth" and "Biggest draw you ever, so help me!" And he began to share Robert's feelings that fifteen shillings was indeed not nearly enough. Bill slouched up to the tent and entered. When he beheld the magnificent proportions of Robert he said but little. "Strike me pink!" were the only words the children could afterwards remember, but he produced fifteen shillings, mainly in sixpences and coppers, and handed it to Robert.

"We'll fix up about what you're to draw when the show's over to-night," he said, with hoarse heartiness. "Lor' love a duck, you'll be that happy with us you'll never want to leave us. Can you do a song now, or a bit of a breakdown?"

"Not to-day," said Robert, rejecting the idea of trying to sing "As Once in May," a favourite of his mother's, and the only song he could think of at the moment.

"Get Levi, and clear them bloomin' photos. out," said Bill. "Clear the tent—stick up a curtain or suthink," the man went on. "Lor', what a pity we ain't got no tights his size! But we'll have 'em before the week's out. Young man, your fortune's made. It's a good thing you came to me and not to some chaps as I could tell you on. I've known blokes as beat their giants and starved 'em too, so I'll tell you straight you're in luck this day if you never was afore. 'Cos I'm a lamb, I am—and I don't deceive you."

"I'm not afraid of anyone's beating *me*," said Robert, looking down on the "lamb." Robert was crouched on his knees, because the tent was not big enough for him to stand upright in, but even in that position he could still look down on most people. "But I'm awfully hungry; I wish you'd get me something to eat."

"Here, 'Becca," said the hoarse Bill, "get him some grub—the best you've got, mind." Another whisper followed, of which the children only heard "down in black and white"—"sealed and stamped first thing to-morrow."

Then the woman went to get the food—it

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was only bread and cheese when it came, but it was delightful to the large and empty Robert—and the man went to post sentinels round the tent, to give the alarm if Robert should attempt to escape with his fifteen shillings.

"As if we weren't honest," said Anthea, indignantly, when the meaning of the sentinels dawned on her.



"WHEN THE GIRL CAME OUT SHE WAS PALE AND TREMBLING."

Then began a very strange and wonderful afternoon.

Bill was a man who knew his business. In a very little while the photographic views, the spy-glasses you look at them through, so that they really seem rather real, and the lights you see them by, were all packed away. A curtain—it was an old red and black carpet, really—was run across the tent. Robert was concealed behind it and Bill was standing on a trestle-table outside the tent making a speech. It was rather a good speech. It began by saying that the giant it was his privilege to introduce to the public that day was the eldest son of the Emperor of San Francisco, compelled through an unfortunate love affair with the Duchess of the Fiji Islands to leave his own country and take refuge in England—the land of liberty, where freedom was the right of every man, no matter how big he was. It ended by the announcement that the first twenty who came to the tent-door should see the giant for threepence apiece. "After that," said Bill, "the price is riz, and I don't undertake to say what it won't be riz to. So now's yer time."

A young man squiring his sweetheart on her afternoon out was the first to come forward. For that occasion his was the princely attitude—no expense spared—money no object. His girl wished to see the giant? Well, she should see the giant, even though seeing the giant cost threepence each, and the other entertainments were all penny ones.

The flap of the tent was raised—the couple entered. Next moment a wild shriek from the girl thrilled through the crowd outside. Bill slapped his leg. "That's done the trick," he whispered to 'Becca. It was, indeed, a splendid advertisement of the charms of Robert. When the girl came out she was pale and trembling, and a larger crowd than before was round the tent.



"WHEN YOUR TIME'S UP COME TO ME."

"What was it like?" asked a bailiff.

"Oh, horrid—you wouldn't believe," she said. "It's as big as a barn, and that fierce. It froze the blood in my bones. I wouldn't ha' missed seeing it for anything."

The fierceness was only caused by Robert's trying not to laugh. But the desire to do that soon left him, and before sunset he was more inclined to cry than to laugh, and more inclined to sleep than either. For by ones, and twos, and threes people kept coming in all the afternoon, and Robert had to shake hands with those who wished it and to allow himself to be punched, and pulled, and patted, and thumped, so that people might make sure he was really real.

The other children sat on a bench and watched and waited, and were very bored indeed. It seemed to them that this was the hardest way of earning money that could have been invented. And only fifteen shillings. Bill had taken four times that already, for the news of the giant had spread, and tradespeople in carts and gentle-people in carriages came from far and near. One gentleman with an eye-glass, and a very large yellow rose in his button-hole, offered Robert, in an obliging whisper, £10 a week to appear at the Royal Aquarium. Robert had to say "No."

"I can't," he said, regretfully. "It's no use promising what you can't do."

"Ah, poor fellow, bound for a term of years, I suppose. Well, here's my card. When your time's up come to me."

"I will — if I'm the same size then," said Robert, truthfully.

"If you grow a bit, so much the better," said the gentleman.

When he had gone, Robert beckoned Cyril and said:—

"Tell them I must and will have an easy. And I want my tea."

Tea was provided, and a paper hastily pinned on the tent. It said:—

"CLOSED FOR HALF AN HOUR WHILE THE GIANT GETS HIS TEA."

Then there was a hurried council.

"How am I to get away?" said Robert. "I've been thinking about it all the afternoon."

"Why, walk out when the sun sets and you're your right size. They can't do anything to us."

Robert opened his eyes. "Why, they'd nearly kill us," he said, "when they saw me get my right size. No, we must think of

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some other way. We *must* be alone when the sun sets."

"I know," said Cyril, briskly, and he went to the door outside which Bill was smoking a clay pipe and talking in a low voice to 'Becca. Cyril heard him say, "Good as havin' a fortune left you."

"Look here," said Cyril; "you can let people come in again in a minute. He's nearly finished his tea. But he *must* be left alone when the sun sets. He's very queer at that time of day, and if he's worried I won't answer for the consequences."

"Why, what comes over him?" asked Bill.

"I don't know; it's—it's a sort of a *change*," said Cyril, candidly. "He isn't at all like himself—you'd hardly know him. He's very queer indeed. Someone'll get hurt if he's not alone about sunset." This was true.

"He'll pull round for the evening, I s'pose?"

"Oh, yes—half an hour after sunset he'll be quite himself again."

"Best humour him," said the woman.

And so, at what Cyril judged was about half an hour before sunset, the tent was again closed "whilst the giant gets his supper."

The crowd was very merry about the giant's meals and their coming so close together.

"Well, he can peck a bit," Bill owned. "You see, he has to eat hearty, being the size he is."

Inside the tent the four children breathlessly arranged a plan of retreat.

"You go *now*," said Cyril to the girls, "and get along home as fast as you can. Oh, never mind the beastly pony-cart, we'll get that to-morrow! Robert and I are dressed the same. We'll manage somehow like Sydney Carton did. Only you girls *must* get out, or it's all no go. We can run, but you can't—whatever you may think. No, Jane, it's no good Robert going out and knocking people down. The police would follow him till he turned his proper size and then arrest him like a shot. Go—you must. If you don't I'll never speak to you again. It was you got us into this mess, really, hanging round people's legs the way you did this morning. *Go*—I tell you."

And Jane and Anthea went.

"We're going home," they said to Bill. "We're leaving the giant with you. Be kind to him." And that, as Anthea said afterwards, was very deceitful, but what were they to do?

When they had gone Cyril went to Bill.

"Look here," he said, "he wants some ears of corn; there's some in the next field but one. I'll just run and get it. Oh, and he says can't you loop up the tent at the back a bit. He says he's stifling for a breath of air. I'll see no one peeps in at him. I'll cover him up and he can take a nap while I go for the corn. He *will* have it; there's no holding him when he gets like this."

The giant was made comfortable with a heap of sacks and an old tarpaulin. The curtain was looped up and the brothers were left alone. They matured their plan in whispers. Outside the merry-go-round blared out its comic tunes, screaming now and then to attract notice. Half a minute after the sun had set a boy in a Norfolk suit came out past Bill.

"I'm off for the corn," he said, and mingled quickly with the crowd.

At the same instant a boy came out of the back of the tent past 'Becca, posted there as sentinel.

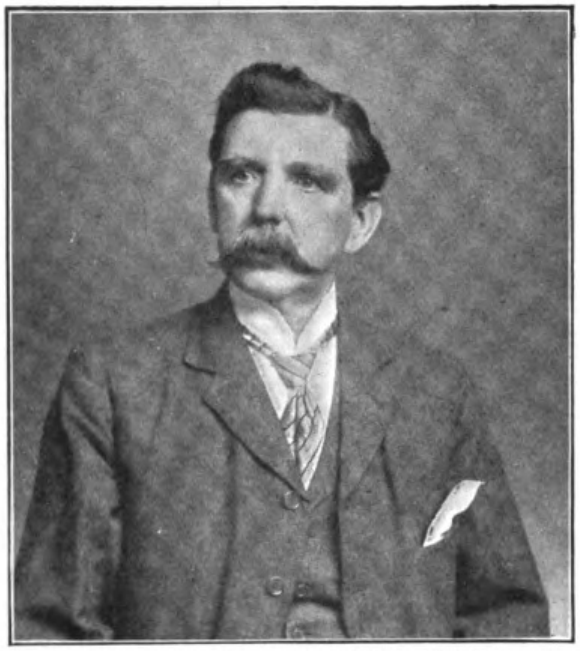
"I'm off after the corn," said this boy also. And he, too, moved away quietly and was lost in the crowd. The front-door boy was Cyril, the back-door boy was Robert—now, since sunset, once more his proper size. They walked quickly through the field and along the road, where Robert caught Cyril up. Then they ran. They were home as soon as the girls were, for it was a long way, and they ran most of it. It was, indeed, a *very* long way, as they found when they had to go and drag the pony-trap home next morning, with no enormous Robert to wheel them in it as if it were a mail-cart, and they were babies and he was their gigantic nursemaid.

I cannot possibly tell you what Bill and 'Becca said when they found that the giant had gone. For one thing, I do not know.

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*Curiosities.**

[*We shall be glad to receive Contributions to this section, and to pay for such as are accepted.*]



THE "YOUNGEST-LOOKING" MAN FOR HIS AGE.

Most people asked to give the age of the gentleman whose photograph we reproduce would say that he probably would be not more than forty, yet the sitter, Mr. R. Troughton, 16, Rydal Terrace, Kendal, is over sixty years of age; to be exact, just sixty-one and a half. He is able to claim the unique distinction of being the youngest-looking man for his age in Great Britain. Some time ago the Editor of *Tit-Bits* offered a prize of five guineas to the reader of that paper who should prove to be the youngest-looking man over sixty years of age. Photographs were sent from all parts of the country, and the number of "youthful" men, of ages varying from sixty to ninety, in the United Kingdom, came as quite a revelation. The winner of the prize had several close rivals, and is certainly to be congratulated; if he only feels as young as he looks, Mr. Troughton should live to acquire the distinction of becoming a centenarian.—Mr. J. Henry Hogg, Kendal.

THE OLD MAN IN THE MIRROR.

"Among the odd photographs that you have published in your Curiosity section there are few that are so puzzling as the one I send you. After photographing a dressing-table I found that I unconsciously took my own portrait. Bending low, however, in doing so, the top only of my head is visible, and assumes a grotesque shape, somewhat resembling an



irate old gentleman."—Miss Cecily Deane Roe, 5, Boulevard de Grancy, Lausanne, Switzerland.



SMARTNESS IN THE AMERICAN POSTAL SERVICE.

"This envelope was mailed to me late one Sunday night and reached me promptly next morning before 8 a.m., and I think it shows the efficiency of our postal service. The profile of the face makes the letters 'A. Craven,' and was deciphered in the post-office here and delivered without delay."—Mr. Alfred Craven, Chattanooga, Tenn.

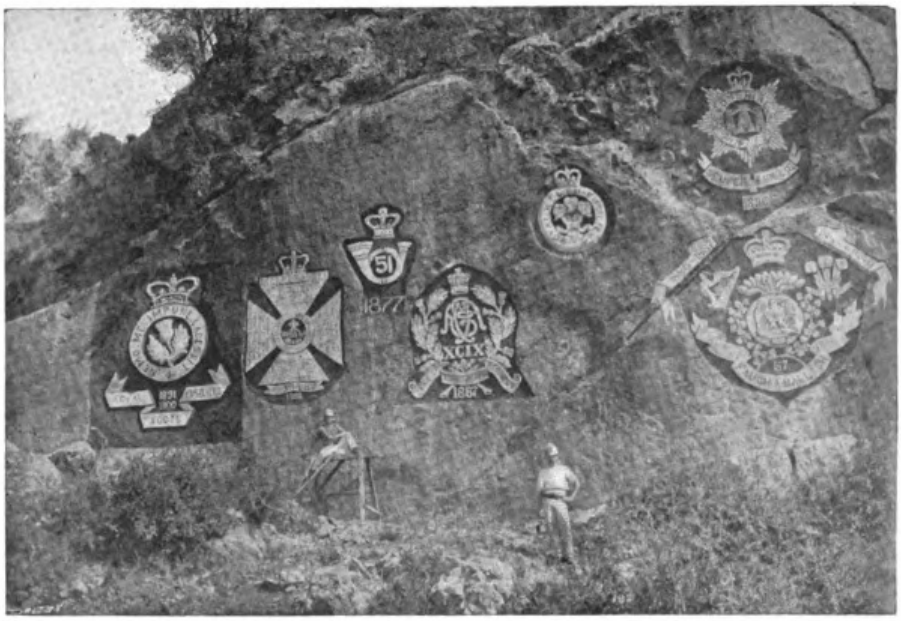
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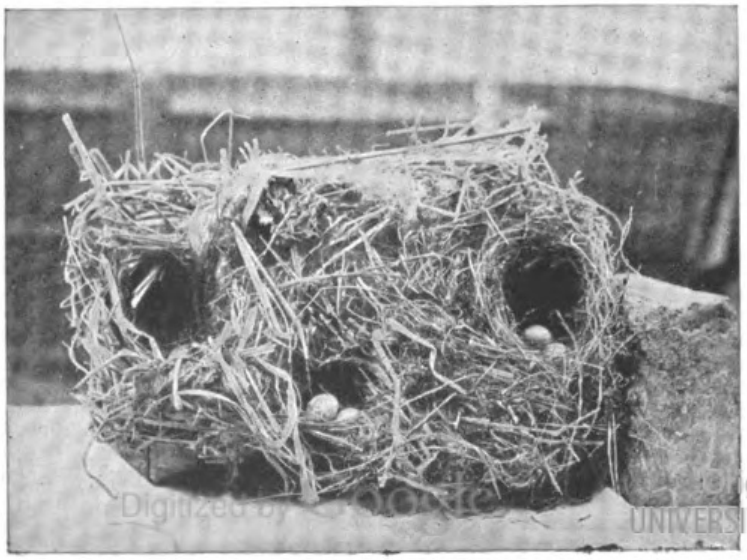
THE FORTUNE-SEEKER'S FAILURE.

"During the spring of 1898 hundreds of prospectors were hurrying toward the gold-fields of the Yukon by the Edmonton route. A large number fitted out at this city, and among the crowd of fortune-seekers was a returned miner named Smith, who built this conveyance. Knowing this route to be a wet and sandy trail, he thought that he could roll on ahead of the waggons, as his load would not sink in the swamps. Inside the barrels were clothing and dry goods, and on top he carried his provisions. He travelled nine miles with his rolling waggon, when his barrels fell apart, and he was compelled to make the remainder of the trip in a cart."—Mr. G. S. Bennett, 116, King Street West, Toronto.



ARTISTIC TOMMY.

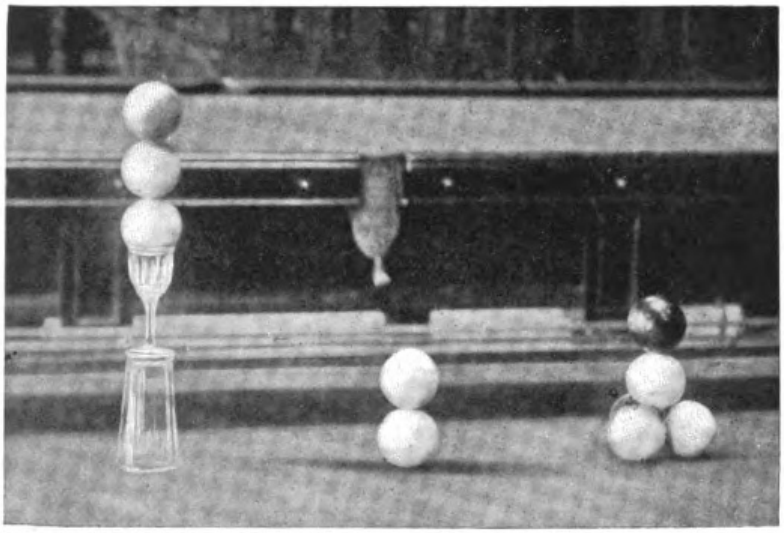
"Here is a photo. of the regimental crests of different regiments which have been stationed at a small place called Cherat, on the Indian frontier. The crests are all cut out of the face of a cliff by 'Tommy,' and are a lasting memento of the regiments' stay in Cherat. The crests, reading from left to right, are: Royal Scots Fusiliers, Rifle Brigade, 51st Regiment, Wiltshire Regiment, Royal Welsh Fusiliers, the Devons, and Royal Irish Fusiliers, all of whom have upheld their names in the late war in South Africa."—Mr. A. Tait, Househillmuir, Reitshill, by Glasgow.



TRIPLET NESTS.

"The extraordinary robin's nest—or rather nests, for there are three of them—of which I send you a photograph taken by myself, was built in an old baking-tin in a hop oast at Bethersden, near here, being found with the eggs distributed as shown in the print. It is not at all likely that it is the work of more than one pair of birds, owing to the extremely pugnacious habits of the robin."—Mr. Charles Stokes, 22, Kent Avenue, Ashford, Kent.

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A CLEVER BALANCING FEAT.

"The tricks shown in the photo. were done on an ordinary full-size billiard-table. The balls are those in use daily by the members of our club. They are very clever balancing feats, and done without any outside aid at all. Our steward will guarantee to do them any time within the half-hour."—Mr. J. W. Whitehead, Hon. Secretary St. Anne's District Club, St. Anne's-on-the-Sea.

CANOEING IN WINTER.

"In the winter of 1898, which was noted for its quantities of snow, a small party of us, four in number and all boys, planned a trip to a summer resort which is some sixty miles north of Montreal, and in the Laurentide Mountains. We thought, among other things, that we would like to have some sliding, but unfortunately had forgotten to bring a toboggan along with us, and after attempting with boards, barrel-staves, and several other contrivances, someone suggested a canoe. In this, using paddles to guide ourselves with, we had some very exciting slides. The sensation, I can assure you, was quite novel." — Mr. W. Earle Walker, 35, Common Street, Montreal.

A STRANGE DWELLING-PLACE.

"I send you the picture of what was, for about three months, the home of William Birkheimer, with whom fortune had for years dealt unfavourably. As can be seen, the 'home' is nothing more or less than an old iron cylinder, 3ft. in diameter and 8ft. long. Its ends are covered with pieces of cloth, etc., to protect its occupant from the inclemency of the weather. Inside it is padded with leaves, etc., to make it comfortable as a sleeping-room. The unfortunate man was struck by a train the day following that on which the picture was taken, and died as a result of his injuries. The enclosed is probably the only picture taken of the 'home' and its occupant. The cylinder, robbed of its embellishments, may still be seen in the Gulley, Mill Street, Belleville, N.J. The whole thing excited not a little interest in these parts until the accident of which I have spoken occurred."—Mr. Joshua J. Turner, 20, Ralph Street, Belleville, N.J.





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HOW DID THIS HAPPEN?

"I send you a most extraordinary photograph, taken by myself, of a brother officer holding his horse; when I printed the photo. the result shown came out. Perhaps some of your readers can tell how this happened."—Capt. W. G. Eden, British Remounts Commission, New Orleans.



"HE GIVES NO TICK."

"I was cycling through a hamlet called Crossbush, near Arundel, Sussex, and saw on the door of one of a row of cottages the notice, a photo. of which I send you. It is certainly unique, and the owner of the cottage was much amused at my taking it."—Miss K. Fox, Redcliffe, St. Catherine's Road, Littlehampton.

AN AUTOGRAPH HAT.

"The photo. I send you is of an autograph hat in my possession. Although many curious



articles have been used for autographs, I have never known of a hat being used for that purpose before. It has on it the names of all the students who have passed through this institution. It measures 10in. in height by 16in. in diameter."—Mr. Rex Tucker, South African School of Mines, Kimberley, S.A.

HOW'S THAT?

"My brother took a snap-shot of me at the wicket. I send you a print of it, and I think you will agree with me that it is a good example of 'snap-shotting.' The bails and ball are in the air, and the stump can be clearly seen in the act of tumbling over. The photo. was taken with a 'Frena' camera at 1-80th of a second."—Mr. Walter H. Jansen, 10, Broughton Road, Stoke Newington, N.

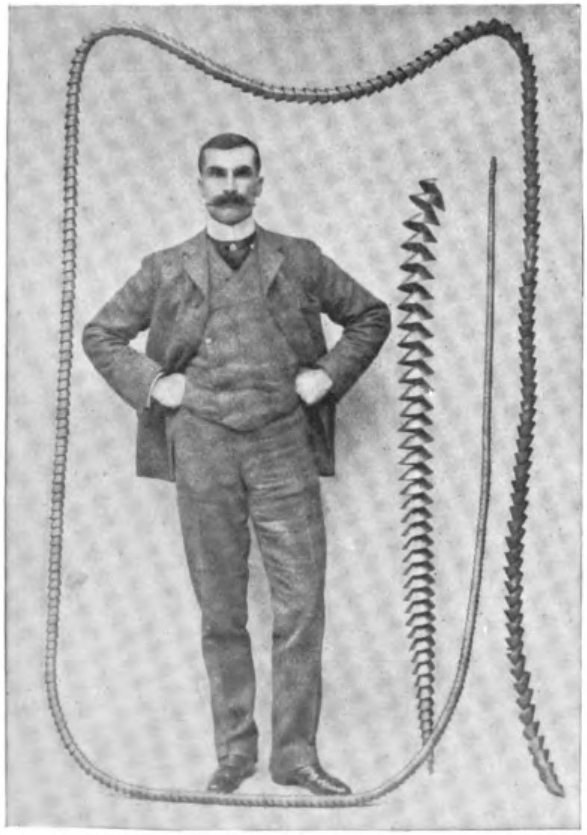


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NOT SUFFERING FROM "SWELLED HEAD."

"The young man whose photograph I send you does not suffer from a 'swelled head.' He is not a martyr to toothache, and is not afflicted with any superfluity of fat. He was only looking through a magnifying glass when I snapped him, and we are friends no longer."—Mr. A. M. Stephen, 132, Sabine Road, Lavender Hill.



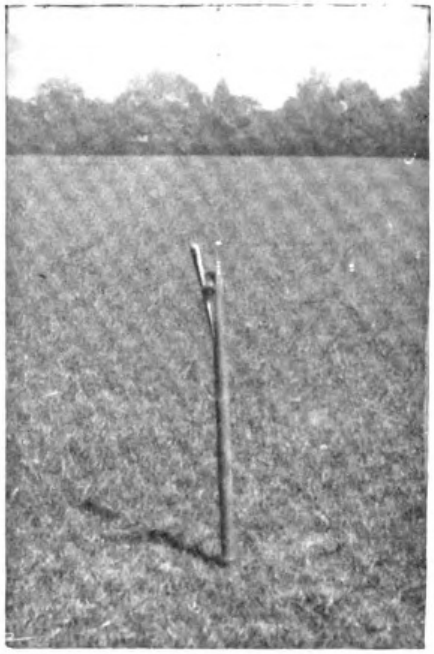


SNAKES OF STEEL.

"The two snaky-looking objects are merely steel cuttings brought off by automatic tools used in the manufacture of the 'Napier' motor carriages. It shows the remarkable tenacity of the modern steel used for this purpose. The long steel cutting is no less than 21ft. in length."—Mr. S. F. Edge, 14, Regent Street, W.

A CRICKET CURIOSITY.

"The cricket-stump shown in my photograph was split in rather a curious manner. In trying to make a late cut over the wicket



I failed to hit the ball, and brought my bat down sharply on the off stump. The portion of the bail resting on the stump was driven into it, splitting it as shown in the photograph, the portion of the bail remaining firmly wedged in the split."—Mr. H. R. Dortridge, 42, Amhurst Park, Stamford Hill, N.

NOT A FREAK.

"I took this photo. from the top of a ladder, looking down, which makes the large head and shoulders and the small feet. It is out of focus on account of my being so close."—Mr. Carlton P. Schaub, 632, Lincoln Avenue, St. Paul, Minn.



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"THE FIST LANDED TO A HAIR ON THE CHIN-POINT."

(*See page* 366.)

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THE STRAND MAGAZINE.

Vol. xxiv. OCTOBER, 1902. No. 142.

*The Comprehension of Private Copper.**

By Rudyard Kipling.

PRIVATE COPPER'S father was a Southdown shepherd, and in early youth Copper had studied under him. Five years' Army service had somewhat blunted Copper's pastoral instincts; but it occurred to him as a memory of the Chalk that sheep, or in this case buck, do not move towards one across turf, or in this case the Colesberg kopjes, unless a stranger, or in this case an enemy, is in the neighbourhood. Copper, helmet back-first, advanced with caution, leaving his mates of the picket half a mile behind. The picket, concerned for its evening meal, did not protest. A year ago it would have been an officer's command, moving in accordance with wise regulations. To-day it paid casual allegiance to a Canadian, nominally a sergeant, actually a trooper of Irregular Horse, discovered convalescent in Naauwpoort Hospital and forthwith employed on odd jobs. Private Copper crawled up the side of a bluish rock-strewn hill, thinly fringed with brush atop, and, remembering how he had peered at Sussex conies through the edge of furze-clumps, cautiously parted the dry stems before his face. At the foot of the long slope sat three farmers, smoking. To his natural lust for tobacco was added personal wrath because spiky plants were pricking his belly, and Private Copper slid the backsight up to fifteen hundred yards.

"Good evening, khaki. Please don't move," said a voice on his left, and as he jerked his head round he saw entirely down the barrel of a well-kept Lee-Metford that protruded from a ridiculously insignificant tuft of thorn. Very few graven images have moved less than did Private Copper through the next ten seconds.

"It's nearer seventeen hundred than fifteen," said a young man in an obviously



"HE SAW ENTIRELY DOWN THE BARREL OF A WELL-KEPT LEE-METFORD."

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ready-made suit of grey tweed, possessing himself of Private Copper's rifle. "Thank *you*. We've got a post of thirty-seven men out yonder. You've eleven—eh? We don't want to kill 'em. We've no quarrel with poor, uneducated khakis, and we don't want prisoners we don't keep. It's demoralizing to both sides—eh?"

Private Copper did not feel called upon to lay down the conduct of guerilla warfare. This dark-skinned, dark-haired, and dark-eyed stranger was his first intimate enemy. He spoke, allowing for a sing-song cadence that recalled to Copper vague memories of Umballa, in precisely the same offensive accent that the young squire of Wilmington had used fifteen years ago when he caught and kicked Alf Copper, a rabbit in each pocket, out of the ditches by Cuckmere. He looked Copper up and down, folded and repocketed a copy of an English weekly which he had been reading, and said, "You seem an inarticulate sort of pig—like the rest of 'em—eh?"

"You," said Copper, thinking, somehow, of the crushing answers he had never given to the young squire, "are a renegid. Why, you ain't Dutch! You're English, same as me!"

"*No*, khaki. If you can't talk civilly to a gentleman, I'll blow your head off."

Copper cringed, and the action overbalanced him so that he rolled some six or eight feet downhill, under the lee of a rough rock. His brain was working with a swiftness and clarity strange in all his experience of Alf Copper. While he rolled he spoke, and the voice from his own jaws amazed him: "If you did, 'twouldn't make you any less of a renegid." As a useful afterthought he added: "I've sprained my ankle."

The young man was at his side in a flash. Copper made no motion to rise, but, cross-legged under the rock, grunted: "'Ow much did old Krujer pay you for this? What was you wanted for at 'ome? Where did you desert from?"

"Khaki," said the young man, sitting down in his turn, "you're a shade better than your mates. You didn't make much more noise than a yoke of oxen when you tried to come up this hill; but you're an ignorant, diseased beast, like the rest of your people—eh? When you were at the Ragged Schools did they teach you any history, Tommy—'istory, I mean?"

"Don't need no schoolin' to know a renegid," said Copper. He had made three yards down the hill—out of sight, unless they could see through rocks, of the enemy's smoking party.

The young man laughed and tossed the soldier a black sweating stick of "True Affection." [Private Copper had not smoked a pipe for three weeks.]

"*You* don't get this—eh?" said the young man. "*We* do. We take it from the trains as we want it. You can keep the cake—you poor Tommy." Copper rammed the good stuff into his long-cold pipe and puffed luxuriously. Two years ago the sister of Gunner-guard De Souza, East India Railway, had, at a dance given by the sergeants to the Allahabad Railway Volunteers, informed Copper that she could not think of waltzing with "a' poo-ah Tommee." Private Copper wondered why that memory should have returned at this hour.

"I'm going to waste a little trouble on you before I kick you and send you back to your picket quite naked—eh? Then you can say how you were overpowered by twenty of us and fired off your last round—like the men we picked up at the drift playing cards at Stryden's Farm—eh? What's your name?"

Private Copper thought for a moment of a far-away housemaid who might still, if the local postman had not gone too far, be interested in his fate. On the other hand, he was, by temperament, economical of the truth. "Pennycuik," he said; "John Pennycuik."

"Thank you. Well, Mr. John Pennycuik, I'm going to teach you a little 'istory, as you'd call it—eh?"

"Drat it!" said Copper, stuffing his left hand in his mouth. "So long since I've smoked I've burned my 'and—an' the pipe's dropped too. No objection to my movin' down to fetch it, is there, sir?"

"I've got you covered," said the young man, graciously, and Private Copper, hopping on one leg, because of his sprain, recovered the pipe yet another three yards downhill and squatted under another rock slightly larger than the first. A roundish boulder made a pleasant rest for his captor, who sat cross-legged once more, facing Copper, his rifle across his knee, his hand on the trigger-guard.

"Well, Mr. Pennycuik, as I was going to tell you. A little after you were born in your English workhouse, your kind, honourable, brave country, England, sent an English gentleman, who could not tell a lie, to say that so long as the sun rose and the rivers

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ran in their courses the Transvaal would belong to England. Did you ever hear that, khaki—eh?"

"Oh, no, sir," said Copper. The sentence about the sun and the rivers happened to be a very aged jest of McBride, the professional humorist of D Company, when they discussed the probable length of the war. Copper had thrown beef-tins at McBride in the grey dawn of many weary camps for intoning it.

"*Of* course you would not. Now, man, I te'l you, listen." He spat aside and cleared his throat. "Because of that little promise my father he moved into the Transvaal and

"*But* my father (he knows better now) kept on believing in the English. I suppose it was the pretty talk about the rivers and suns that cheated him—eh? Anyhow, he believed in his own country. In his own country. *So* he was a little startled when he found himself handed over to the Transvaal as a prisoner of war. That's what it came to, Tommy—a prisoner of war. You know what that is. England was too honourable and too gentlemanly to take trouble. There were no terms made for my father."

"So 'e made 'em 'imself. Useful old bird." Private Copper sliced up another pipeful and looked out across the wrinkled



"THERE WERE NO TERMS MADE FOR MY FATHER."

bought a farm—a little place of twenty or thirty thousand acres, don't—you—know."

The tone, in spite of the sing-song cadence fighting with the laboured parody of the English drawl, was unbearably like the young Wilmington squire's, and Copper found himself saying: "I ought to. I've 'elped burn some."

"Yes; you'll pay for that later. *And* he opened a store."

"Ho! Shopkeeper, was he?"

"The kind you call 'sir' and sweep the floor for, Pennycuik. . . . You see, in those days one used to believe in the British Government. My father did. *Then* the Transvaal wiped thee earth with the English. Beat 'em six times running. You know *thatt*—eh?"

"That's what we've come 'ere for."

sea of kopjes through which came the roar of the rushing Orange River, so unlike quiet Cuckmere.

The young man's face darkened. "I think I shall sjambok you myself when I've quite done with you. *No*, my father (he was a fool) made no terms for eight years—ninety-six months, and for every day of them the Transvaal made his life hell for my father and—his people."

"I'm glad to hear that," said the impenitent Copper.

"Are you? You can think of it when I'm cutting the skin off your back—eh? . . My father lost everything—everything—down to his self-respect. You don't know what *that* means—eh?"

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"Why?" said Copper. "I'm smokin' baccy stole by a renegid. Why wouldn't I know?"

If it came to a flogging on that hillside there might be a chance of reprisals. Of course, he might be marched to the Boer camp in the next valley and there operated upon; but Army life teaches no man to cross a bridge till he comes to it.

"Yes, after eight years my father, cheated by your dog of a country, he found out who was the upper dog in South Africa."

"That's me," said Copper, valiantly. "If it takes another 'alf century, it's me an' the likes of me."

"You? Heaven help you! You'll be screaming at a waggon-wheel in an hour. . . . Then it struck my father that he'd like to shoot the people who'd betrayed him. You—you—*you!* He told his son all about it. He told him never to trust the English. He told him to do them all the harm he could. Man, I tell you, I don't want much telling. I was born in the Transvaal—I'm a burgher. If my father didn't love the English, by the Lord, mann, I tell you I hate them from the bottom of my soul!"

The voice quavered and ran high. Once more, for no conceivable reason, Private Copper found his inward eye turned upon Umballa cantonments of a dry, dusty afternoon when the saddle-coloured son of a local hotel-keeper came to the barracks to complain of a theft of fowls. He saw the dark face, the plover's-egg-tinted eyeballs, and the thin, excited hands. Above all, he remembered the passionate, queerly-strung words. Slowly he returned to South Africa, using the very sentence his sergeant had used to the poultry-man.

"Go on with your complaint. I'm listenin'."

"Complaint! Complain about *you*, you ox! We strip and kick your sort by thousands."

The young man rocked to and fro above the rifle, whose muzzle thus deflected itself from the pit of Private Copper's stomach. His face was working with passion.

"Yess. I'm a Transvaal burgher. Ha! It took us about twenty years to find out how rotten you were—*we* knew and you know it now. Your Army it is the laughing-stock of the Continent." He tapped the newspaper in his pocket. "You think you're going to win, you poor fools. Your people—your own people—your silly, rotten fools of people will crawl out of it as they did after Majuba. They are beginning now. Look what your own working classes, the diseased, lying, drinking white stuff that you come out of, are saying." He thrust the English weekly doubled at the leading article on Copper's knee. "See what dirty dogs your masters are. They do not even back you in your dirty work. *We* cleared the country down to Ladysmith—to Estcourt. *We* cleared the country down to Colesberg."

"Yes. We 'ad to clean up be'ind you. Mucky, I call it."

"You've had to stop farm-burning because your people daren't do it. They were afraid. You daren't kill a spy! You daren't shoot a spy when you catch him in your own uniform! You daren't touch our loyal people in Cape Town! Your masters won't let you. You will feed our women and children till we are quite ready to take them back. *You* can't put your cowardly noses out of the towns you say you've occupied. *You* daren't move a convoy twenty miles. You think you've done something? You've done nothing, and you've taken a quarter of a million men to do it! There isn't a nigger in South Africa that doesn't obey us if we lift our finger. You pay the stuff four pound a month and they lie to you. *We* flog 'em, as I shall flog you."

He clasped his hands together and leaned forward his out-thrust chin within two feet of Copper's left or pipe hand.

"Yuss," said Copper, "it's a fair knock-out." The fist landed to a hair on the chin-point, the neck snicked like a gun-lock, and the back of the head crashed on the boulder behind.

Copper grabbed up both rifles, unshipped the crossed bandoleers, drew forth the English weekly, and picking up a lax hand looked long and intently at the finger-nails.

"No! Not a sign of it there," he said. "'Is nails are as clean as mine, but he talks just like 'em, though. And he's a landlord, too! A landed proprietor! Shockin', I call it."

The arms began to flap with returning consciousness. Private Copper rose up and whispered: "If you open your head I'll bash it." There was no suggestion of sprain in the flung-back left boot. "Now walk in front of me, both arms perpendicularly elevated. I'm only a third-class shot, so if you don't object I'll rest the muzzle of my rifle lightly but firmly on your collar-button, thus coverin' what I 'ave 'eard called the serviceable vertebree. If your friends see us thus engaged, you pray—'ard."

Private and prisoner stumbled downhill. No shots broke the peace of that adorable

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afternoon, but once the young man checked and was violently sick.

"There's a lot of things I could say to you," Copper observed, at the close of the paroxysm, "but it doesn't matter. Look 'ere, you call me 'pore Tommy' again."

The prisoner hesitated.

"Oh, I ain't goin' to do anythin' *to* you. I'm reconnoiterin' on my own. Say 'pore Tommy,' like a bloomin' parrot, 'alf-a-dozen times."

The prisoner obeyed.

"*That's* what's been puzzlin' me since I 'ad the pleasure o' meetin' you," said Copper. "You ain't 'alf caste, but you talk *chee-chee—pukka* bazar *chee-chee*. *Pro*-ceed, Antonio."

"Halloa!" said the sergeant of the picket, twenty minutes later, "where did you round him up?"

"On the top o' yonder craggy mounting. There's a mob of 'em sitting round their Bibles seventeen 'undred yards (you said it was seventeen 'undred?) t'other side—an' I only a loyal farmer with dynamite in his boots? Tell us all about it, burjer!"

"You leave my prisoner alone," said Private Copper. "'E's 'ad losses an' trouble; an' it's in the family, too. 'E thought I never read the papers, so 'e kindly lent me one, an' 'e explained it to me as patronizin' as a Militia subaltern doin' Railway Staff Officer. 'E's a left-over from Majuba — one of the worst kind, an' 'earin' the evidence as I did I don't exactly repre'end 'im. It was this way."

To the picket Private Copper held forth for ten minutes on the life-history of the captive. Allowing for some purple patches, it was an absolutely fair rendering.

"But what I *dis*-liked was this baccy-priggin' beggar, oo's people, on 'is own showin', couldn't 'ave been more than thirty or forty years on this Gawd-forsaken dust-'eap, comin' the squire over me. They're all parsons—we know *that;* but parson *an'* squire is a bit too thick for Alf Copper. Why, I



"'THEY'RE ONLY PO-AH TOMMIES,' SAID COPPER."

want some coffee." He sat down on the smoke-blackened stones by the fire.

"'Ow did you get 'im?" said McBride, professional humorist, quietly filching the English weekly from under his armpit.

"On the chin—while 'e was waggin' it at me."

"What is 'e? 'Nother Colonial rebel to be 'orribly disenfranchised, or a Cape M.P., or caught 'im in the shameful act of tryin' to start a aristocracy on a gun an' a waggon an' a shambuk. Yes; that's what it was: a bloomin' aristocracy."

"No, it weren't," said McBride, at length, on the dirt, above the purloined weekly. "You're the aristocrat, Alf. Old *Jerrold's* givin' it you 'ot. You're the uneducated 'ireling of a cal—callous aristocracy which 'as

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sold itself to the 'Ebrew financeer. Meantime, Ducky" — he ran his finger down a column of assorted paragraphs — "you're slakin' your brutal instincks in furious excesses. Shriekin' women an' desolated 'omesteads is what you enjoy, Alf. . . . Halloa, what's a smokin' 'ekt&comb?"

"'Ere! Let's look. 'Aven't seen a spicy paper for a year. 'Good old *Jerrold's!*" Pinewood and Moppett, Reservists, flung themselves on McBride's shoulders, pinning him to the ground.

"Lie over your own bloomin' side of the bed, an' we can all look," he protested.

"They're only po-ah Tommies," said Copper, apologetically, to the prisoner. "Po-ah uneducated khakis. *They* don't know what they're fightin' for. They're lookin' for what the diseased, lying, drinkin' white stuff that they come from is sayin' about 'em!"

The prisoner set down his tin of coffee and stared helplessly round the circle.

"I—I don't understand them."

well provide an escort for your prisoner. He's waitin'."

"Arf a mo, sergeant," said McBride, still reading. "'Ere's Old Barbarity on the ramp again with some of 'is lady-friends, oo don't like concentration camps. 'Wish they'd visit ours. Pinewood's a married man. He'd know 'ow to be'ave."

"Well, I ain't goin' to amuse Antonio alone. 'E's gettin' peevish," cried Copper. "One of you thieves read out what's vexin' Old Barbarity an' 'is 'arem these days. You'd better listen, Antonio, because, afterwards, I'm goin' to fall out an' perpetrate nameless barbarities on you, for to keep up the reputation of the British Army."

From that English weekly, to bar out which a large and perspiring staff of Press censors toil seven days of the week at Cape Town, did Pinewood of the Reserve read unctuously excerpts of the speeches of the accredited leaders of His Majesty's Opposition. The night-picket arrived in the middle of it, but stayed entranced without paying any compli-



"HANDS UP, PRISONER!"

The Canadian sergeant, picking his teeth with a thorn, nodded sympathetically.

"If it comes to that, *we* don't in my country! . . . Say, boys, when you're through with your English mail you might's

ments, till Pinewood had entirely finished the leading article.

"Gentlemen of the jury," said Alf Copper, hitching up what remained to him of trousers; "you've 'eard what 'e's been fed

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up with. *Do* you blame the beggar? 'Cause I don't! . . . Leave 'im alone, McBride. He's my first an' only prisoner, an' I'm goin' to walk 'ome with him, ain't I, Ducky? . . . Fall in, Antonio. It's Bermuda, or Umballa, or Ceylon for you, and—I'd give a month's pay to be in your little shoes."

As not infrequently happens, the actual moving off the ground broke the prisoner's nerve. He stared at the tinted hills round him, gasped, and began to struggle—kicking, swearing, weeping, and fluttering all together.

"Pore beggar—oh! pore, *pore* beggar!" said Alf, leaning in on one side of him, while Pinewood blocked him on the other.

"Let me go! Let me go! Mann, I tell you, let me go——"

"'E screams like a woman!" said McBride. "They'll 'ear 'im five miles off."

"There's one or two ought to 'ear 'im—in England," said Copper, putting aside a wildly waving arm.

"Married, ain't 'e?" said Pinewood. "I've seen 'em go like this before—just at the last. '*Old* on, old man. No one's goin' to kill you."

The last of the sun threw the enormous shadow of a kopje over the little, anxious, wriggling group.

"Quit that," said the sergeant of a sudden. "You're only making him worse. Hands *up*, prisoner! Now you get a holt of yourself, or this'll go off!"

And indeed the revolver-barrel square at the man's panting chest seemed to act like a tonic: he choked, recovered himself, and fell in between Copper and Pinewood.

As the picket neared the camp it broke into song that was heard among the officers' tents:—

'E sent us 'is blessin' from London town
(The beggar that kep' the cordite down).
But what do we care if 'e smile or frown?—
The beggar that kep' the cordite down.
The mildly nefarious,
Wildly barbarious
Beggar that kep' the cordite down.

Said a captain a mile away: "Why are they singing *that?* We haven't had a mail for a month, have we?"

An hour later said the same captain to his servant: "Jenkins, I understand the picket have got a—got a newspaper off a prisoner to-day. I wish you could lay hands on it, Jenkins. Copy of the *Times*, I think."

"Yes, sir. Copy of the *Times*, sir," said Jenkins, without a quiver, and went forth to make his own arrangements.

"Copy of the *Times?*" said the blameless Alf, from under a blanket. "*I* ain't a member of the Soldiers' Institoot. Go an' look in the reg'mental readin'-room—Veldt Row, Kopje Street, second turnin' to the left between 'ere an' Naauwpoort."

Jenkins summarized briefly in a tense whisper the few things that Alf Copper need not be.

"But *my* particular copy of the *Times* is specially pro'ibited by the censor from corruptin' the morals of the Army. Get a written order from K., properly countersigned, an' I'll think about it."

"I've got all you want," said Jenkins. "Hurry up. I want to 'ave a squint myself."

Something gurgled in the darkness, and Private Copper fell back smacking his lips.

"Gawd bless my prisoner and make me a good boy. Amen. 'Ere you are, Jenkins. It's dirt cheap at a tot."

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Football Teams Recalled.

By C. B. Fry.

ALL the long streets in busy Sunderland, from ship-yard, coal-pit, wharf, and forge, seem on match-days to lead to the famous ground at Roker Park where the "Wearsiders," the present champions of the League, are glad to meet and beat their rivals. The game flourishes amazingly amid the coal and the iron and the shipping. And it is a mistake to suppose that in this or any other great stronghold of Leaguedom eleven men play and all the rest look on. The big club is the centre of interest because it sums up and concentrates the keen love of football that permeates the busy populace. But there are other clubs besides. In Sunderland, for example, there are three very good second-class teams, second-class compared with such a team as the big one, but not much inferior to many which in other and lesser towns are regarded as first-class; and there are no fewer than seventeen so-called junior clubs, no mean exponents of the game; and there is a school league which plays tremendously keen football. Nor is the big club selfish; its authorities encourage and assist the smaller teams, and rejoice to see them efficient and prosperous.

Perhaps the most curious point about the career of the Sunderland club has been its want of success in Cup-ties. In the League competition it has done very well, better than any other club except Aston Villa; and it has several times possessed a team which experts have declared on general form to be the best in the country. Yet, strange to say, it has never won the Cup. It looks almost as though Sunderland preferred to husband its strength for success in the League matches, but no doubt the club has had bad luck in the Cup-ties, where the best team of all may easily be knocked out in an early round if it happens to hit an off-day. But Sunderland's League record is excellent: out of fourteen seasons, three times first, three times second, and once third. A high place in the League table can be won only by consistently good play right through a season, and the maintenance of a high place through a number of seasons is proof, not only of a high standard of play, but of an excellent morale and first-rate management.

Southern footballers have never seen much of Sunderland, and we are not familiar with the personality of the team. The fame of the club has been made by a fine type of player, broad-shouldered, sturdy, and hard: the club likes science and cleverness, but will have weight and dash besides. The Sunderland player is heavy to meet, and in a fair charge usually hurts you more than you hurt him; however neat and tricky of foot he may be, you cannot easily shift him out of his straight line; he may be able to dodge you like a rabbit, but he looks as though he could heave a big sack of coal. There is no better example of what the southerner calls the real northern player, fit for rough or muddy grounds and inclement weather, powerful



From a Photo. by] SUNDERLAND. *[W. E. Church.*

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and sure-footed and lively with good condition, and warm with energy in the bleakest north wind when the field is edged with grimy banks of snow and wisped with straw. There have been many Scotchmen in the team: so many that some people regard it as almost a Scottish club. But it is a mistake to regard its players as mere importations, ready-made from across the Tweed.

Sunderland has always possessed a number of Scottish inhabitants: many families settled there as far back as 1640, and gave, it is said, a great impulse to trade. So a man may have a very Scottish name, yet be a genuine native of the town. And those players who have actually come from Scotland have for the most part been young, and have been trained and made in Sunderland. Indeed, one of the causes of the popularity of the club, both in its own district and in the north generally, is that it has always been eager to make the most of its home-grown talent. It is worth mentioning these points because sarcastic comments are sometimes made upon "a team of Scotchmen playing for an English town," or "a Scottish team champion of the English League." Last year the team was a great one, strong in every position, but especially strong in defence. Doig, the veteran goal-keeper, had not superior for safety and skill, and W. Hogg was selected as the best outside right forward to play for England.

Not far from Manchester is Bury, a cindery-looking spot in its football parts, with tall chimneys and a hard, grimy aspect. But withal kind football hearts grow there, and they cheer the winners of any hard-fought game—only it must be hard. The football there is of the bull-terrier type, something racy with cropped ears and strong muscles. The crowd will see football, will pay to see it, and each man chooses his own pet spot to view from. They know the game to the core. Gig Lane the ground is called, with high stands on one side and a cemetery on the other; a good stretch of turf in fine weather, but thereabouts it rains so often, or else snows or freezes; and the mud can be deep and sticky after a thaw.

The Bury team last year was one of the youngest, nippiest, and springiest in the League. A home-bred team chiefly, for Bury turns out enough players for home consumption and for export. A good type of player comes from here: fast, full of go, trained to the hour, not hurried, and with plenty of reserve for the second half of a game. The Bury team that won the Cup three seasons back was a proper team, against which no despiser could cast the aspersion of "hired gladiators," for every man in it was a worker at some craft or trade in the town he played for—worked all the week and turned out on a Saturday to win the English Cup. It was a similar team again last year with most of the same men still playing, a mettlesome and aggressive team, preferring attack to defence, and at its best in its adversary's half of the field.

The Bury forwards are famous for speed and dash, led by Sagar, a most original and unconventional centre: a noted goal-getter from his own masterful runs. He is a beautiful player to watch, manœuvring in such a small space, and so quick to slip through with long, elastic strides: he runs without effort and you do not notice his pace till you try to catch him. He makes his own openings, taps the ball, and is away through; a natural player, with rare judgment, easily misunderstood by the bullet-headed worshipper of fixed style.

All the Bury forwards are fast and they go straight ahead, not passing the ball this way and that or dribbling round a sixpence. Plant at outside left is a sprinter with a knowing, heavy-hitting foot and an angular shoulder to run into. Richards, on the other wing, is a swooper, with a knack of forging ahead and getting there first. Wood, inside right, is a most uncompromising and clever forward, who fights every yard of ground. The star of the defence is Thorpe, the centre half, a young player, long limbed and splendidly active. He is tall, and has a forehead most apt for heading the ball. He is an embodiment of the Bury football spirit, unflagging, and moving with a certain sanguine *élan*. Played as it is at Bury, football is, in the best sense of the term, good sport. The game is made to mean something, and success is highly esteemed.

Sheffield is an ancient nurse of footballers. The name was to the fore in the earliest history of the game, and has been there ever since. Sheffield football is not intermittent: it is a natural product of the place; year in, year out, either the blue and white shirts of Sheffield Wednesday or the red and white of Sheffield United are carried high up the League ladder or into the later rounds of the Cup-ties. The local rivalry runs deadly keen, and when the two neighbours meet the fight is to the death, and no one can pick the survivor beforehand. At present the United team, in proud possession of the Cup, claims right of place in public esteem.

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A bad team to beat, this. There is a doggedness about them that has to be reckoned with over and above their face value as exponents of the game. You read of them as having been beaten by this or that other team, and on comparative form you think your own chance is good. And



From a Photo. by] SHEFFIELD UNITED. *[Jasper Redfern.*

when the day comes and the play, you cannot see where it is they are better than you. But somehow you find that to beat them you have to play, not as well as they do nor a little better, but a great deal better. You cannot give a name to what it is in them that baulks you of your stride to victory; but it is there, some stumbling-block inherent in their play. Is it unitedness? Or is it Sheffieldness? Or a bit of both? Anyhow, it is there. There is a continual try about them from beginning to end, an unflagging resistance that becomes aggressive the instant you falter a step.

Perhaps that ambidextrous Needham is the keynote of the tune. Billed to appear at half-back, you find him, to your cost, occupying, in due season and at crucial moments, the whole field of play. He has a wonderful knack of distributing his influence, himself, and the ball. You seem to knock up against him where he is not, and when he is really near it is quite unnecessary to trifle, or miskick, or hesitate, for any half error of yours he will turn to something wholly advantageous to himself. Small he is, but with such a will! Then those other two half-backs, his mates, leave little undone. Wilkinson, a sort of up-and-down-the-field demon, nippy and elastic, and with a foot magnetic for the ball, making it come to him out of any jumble. A brand-new link this, small, but solid and finely tempered, in the strong chain of Sheffield half-backs. And Johnson on the left—plug, plug, plug, the ninety minutes through, never tired and always in the way. Then the backs behind them are splendid heavy cavalry. There is thick-set Thickett charging this way and that, and breaking up your nicest manœuvres with the rude shock of his rush. In a hard game he weighs a deal more than his weight on paper, and sobers your most enthusiastic forward. With him is Boyle, a straight-running Irishman, who goes for the ball in get-out-of-the-way style; a genuine tackler. And behind all, in goal, is that mountainous barrier Foulke, whom no charge can move, yet who moves so quickly, gathering a hard shot on two fingers. Goals are not easy to score against this defence. And the forwards in line, standing to be fed with the ball or running with it at their feet, are a never-ceasing menace to you. In the centre is Hedley, amiable and respectable to the eye, but, give him half an opening, a mischievous

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man: a sober player rather than a brilliant, but none the less dangerous, and his comrades trust him and give him the ball, believing he will put it through. On his left hand the wing is Priest and Lipsham: Priest very strong on his feet and hard to shift, who moves accurately and with venom through narrow spaces; Lipsham, the outside, a swinging runner, with a clever left foot for hooking the ball in and a precise touch. On the right a sturdy, determined pair, Bennett and Common: the former an uncommon sort of outside forward, notable for cleverness of foot rather than for speed, but difficult to stop in an independent run and a terrific shooter from all angles; the latter a classy athletic player, smart in combined play and a prompt rusher near goal. How victories were over its neighbour, West Bromwich; and West Bromwich won the final in which the Villa was beaten. Its League record speaks for itself, and League honours are not easily won.

The Villa has, of course, a great advantage in its comparative wealth; for want of funds is the chief difficulty with which the big clubs with their ambitious programmes have to contend. Still, to suppose that money alone will make a club successful is an error: there must besides be available knowledge of the game and of players, and skill and tact in management. For the last two seasons the Villa team has not been so much to the front as in previous years; but the reason seems to be that it has not yet recovered from the process of transition from the old



From a Photo. by] ASTON VILLA. *[Powls & May.*

they worry and worry you, these forwards, till the ball is through; and then they go away to begin worrying all over again. Such is the team that won the English Cup last year, and might easily win it again.

Birmingham is almost a little football world in itself, for among many smaller clubs it can boast two with great histories—Aston Villa and West Bromwich; and another of considerable fame—Small Heath. But Aston Villa is on general grounds the greatest club of the three; indeed, it has fair claims to be reckoned the greatest in the land. It possesses a splendid ground with huge accommodation, draws big gates, is rich and prosperous, and has an unrivalled record. Three times it has won the English Cup and five times the championship of the League. To the honour of Birmingham two of its Cup players to the new. The main characteristics of the Villa style are still evident enough: the forwards still play a finished, scientific, short passing game, though John Devey no longer leads and inspires the line, and there is no centre forward like Archie Hunter, and no junior replica of Daniel Hodgetts has yet appeared.

Templeton and Bache make a strong left wing. Templeton is a beautiful sprinter, yet no mere sprinter; he has the true Scottish grip of the ball, and can control and use it. He is a difficult handful for any back to tackle, for he goes with a swoop and a flash, can feint without stopping or turning from his line, and can middle the ball when running at full speed. He played for Scotland against England last year. His partner, Bache, is a strong, determined player, and

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feeds his wing man unselfishly. And Clarke, the outside right, runs through with a will: a sprightly, adroit player. Then there is Crabtree, the versatile and unchanging. But the tale of Villa players is long, as befits a long purse.

At Nottingham football is supposed to have killed cricket; but the latter game does not appear quite dead, not dead enough for a post-mortem. With two strong clubs playing almost within bowshot of one another football certainly is very much alive. Of the two Notts Forest is just now ahead of Notts



From a Photo. by] NOTTS FOREST. *[Arthur Shields.*

County; but it was not always so. Good Cup-fighters are the Forest men, a formidable, heavy-looking lot in their scarlet shirts and white knickers. Even a light man looks big inside that staring red, and when the team takes the field it seems to occupy more than its fair share of space; the colour multiplies the men. Frank Forman, who plays centre half for England as well as for his club, has been for some years the star man of the team: a remarkable player, long legged and scientific, and a genius for finding the ball. An interesting figure is Iremonger, the tall back, who is so valuable a batsman for the Notts eleven; if he hit at cricket as hard as he kicks at football, he would become a rival of C. I. Thornton and G. L. Jessop.

The Forest forwards are sometimes very oppressive to the opposing defence; they go off from the whistle with a heavy burst, and mean to rush you all they know in the first ten minutes. Their pivot-man, Calvey, a clever heavy-weight, requires close attendance, or you find him through you with his accurate foot hugging the ball close, ready to shoot, and his broad shoulders fending you aside as you try to tackle him. Both his wings are energetic and thrusting; they do not wait upon your wishes, but play bang away for the main chance. The Nottingham man is canny enough; he prefers effectiveness to mere polish. His football is robust, most business-like, and well meant.

Except when Nottingham is engaged in civil war the neighbour rival of both its clubs is Derby County, the team of Stephen Bloomer and the Goodalls. Derby is often called a one-man team, which means that Bloomer is its man. He is a terrible fellow to stop, and wins matches for his side by sheer individual brilliancy, does this great player; greater some days than others, but always to be feared. An inspired forward if ever there was one, in his football clothes he is a bundle of flexible wire with double-jointed knees for screw-shooting, and his force seems to come from some electric dynamo which, when properly charged, can put out an inhuman spurt of speed. He is young outwardly, and has the football joy in his blood. But nowadays no one man makes a team, nor is Derby football poor even deprived of its one gem. Lately and before the "County" teams have been strong all through.

Renowned John Goodall used to captain fine, stalwart combinations on the old ground away by the racecourse, and taught them the lore he had learnt in his old Preston North End days. And now his brother Archie leads another as good on the base-ball ground close by the Midland Railway. A tough, hard-bitten Irishman is Archie

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From a Photo. by] DERBY COUNTY. *[Dereské.*

Goodall: a sort of Scottish Irishman who seems all angles when you run into him. What a sturdy pair of legs he wears; and he never stops to grasp the idea of being beaten. He plays with the inveterate keenness, the cool keenness of the old warrior who is still young in deeds. Good comrades he has behind him in Methwen and Morris, a splendid pair of backs, and in Fryer, the goal-keeper, whose height and reach make his goal-mouth so very small. You do not ever come from Derby with a light-work victory; if you win you have deserved it.

The Southampton club has an uncommon sort of ground. Once a narrow, marshy gorge, it has been transformed into a semi-natural amphitheatre, with covered stands and tiers of seats upon the steep enclosing banks: it is called The Dell. The arena is deep below the people; as you play you seem to be in the middle of four high converging waves of heads. The team is popularly known as "the Saints," because the club used to be Southampton St. Mary's. The local war-cry is a high-pitched "Yi-yi-yi-ee!" a kind of half-fledged American college shout, only less complicated. It was a fine team that struggled through to the final last season, to be beaten by an odd goal; a varminty, come-at-the-finish team. It was supposed to contain too many veterans for success in the up-to-date turmoil of Cup-ties. But veterans are as old as they play, and no older. Harry Wood, for instance, once upon a time the leading forward of the Wolverhampton Wanderers, could still lead a strenuous attack; no longer a fast runner, yet able by skilful manœuvring and an eye for country to achieve the results of pace, always in the right spot, always finding clear passages for the ball, with a persuasive, far-reaching foot. And Edgar Chadwick, he who once with Milward made the Everton left wing so famous, was as quick-witted, as busy, and as timely as ever, always on the ball in his own sphere of action, and difficult to baulk in his movements.

And if the two veteran forwards were short of pace, the other three made up for it, enough and to spare. The line did not, as a rule, go down the field in a crescent-shaped formation, with the outside men on the horns, but in a sort of zigzag, with the centre forward as much in front of the two inside wing men as were the two outsides. The line, in fact, was, so to speak, divided into two sections of three, the centre man counting in both; and the inside man on each wing

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acted as a centre between the outside man and the nominal centre forward. It was not a common game, and it paid well enough. A. Brown, the centre forward, a finely-striding sprinter who runs in deep mud with the free, light swing and long, even action of the cinder-track, used to hover about on the fringe of the attack ready to rush right through single-footed. The goals he gets happen quickly. The game is as good as half, Bowman, a Scot and a prize player. In the rear-guard, two unmovable bulwarks were Molyneux at back and Robinson in goal—goal-savers unto death. Molyneux a hardy, unshrinking tackler and safe, undeniable kicker, always in form; and Robinson a strong-man athlete, active and powerful, with a cricketer's eye for timing and the ball. No mediocre team, in sum, against the best in the land were the Saints.



From a Photo. by] SOUTHAMPTON. *[Reinhold, Thiele, & Co.*

over; suddenly he is off dead straight and in a flash you are left in for another round.

The two outside men, the two Turners, J. and A., unrelated except in speed, had last year few, if any, superiors. J. Turner, a shrewd, determined dasher; away along the touch-line, or suddenly found in front of goal, an opportune and dangerous opponent. A. Turner, a slight-built sprinter with a delicately clever foot and an uncanny power over the ball, an elusive feinter on the run, and hard to dispossess save with a heavy charge. No mean set of forwards these, and they pulled many a game out of the fire. The half-backs, effective rather than polished, workers rather than artists, except the centre

The Portsmouth club, which last year won the championship of the Southern League, and travelled well up into the Cup-tie rounds (and would have gone farther perhaps, bar accidents and illness), is young and strong and of a good heart. The team is curiously known by the collective nickname of Pompey. Pompey does this and Pompey does that. His ground is of fine, sound turf, real turf, not pounded mud, on the flat lands at Fratton. He is heavily supported by soldiers from the forts and barracks, by sailors from the battleships and other craft, and by dockyard hands of various grades.

His war-cry is the Portsmouth chimes as played by the town-hall clock, a deep, tune-

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ful ditty that sounds well on the cornet. Pompey as a team is more of a sailor than anything else, a rollicking, good-natured, dare-devil fellow, moving with free limbs and a hearty roll. We met him in fine fettle last year fore and aft, a team with a swing. His goal-keeper was Reilly, an Irish International, once a soldier, but not now out of keeping with the nautical trim of the team, a daring scrimmager in a *mêlée* in goal-mouth, and a free, loose-jointed fister of the ball, not a flincher.

The two backs were Wilkie and Burgess, of the old-fashioned sort, standing well away and kicking clear down the field with all the might of long, heavy legs, and not a bad sort either. Sometimes over strong in their kicking, a little fault; never too weak, a big one. Stout guardians of the fatal thirty yards round goal.

The half-back trio was tough and workmanlike, with a centrepiece of the top class in Chadwick, conspicuous for his red head and broad, ubiquitous forehead and aggressive pinkness of condition. A breaker-up of combination, this one; he takes your three inside forwards this way and that one after the other, and rarely misses his spread-eagle, masterful tackle, and he seems to get there without running. The other two were Stringfellow, a clever worker, minding his own part of the field very ably, and Blythe, a jabbing, untiring blocker of passes.

But Pompey's pride was his forward line when complete and in good order. The centre forward was Bedingfield, perhaps the best man in the country in this position with G. O. Smith not playing; heavy enough to rush you, yet a delicate passer and dribbler and a pounding, straight low shooter at goal. It was ill work stopping him. Steven Smith, once of Aston Villa, a famous outside left, had a brother as partner, and the two made a grand wing: Steven, thick, quick, and elusive, and his brother, thrusting, unselfish, and fond of a charge. With this pair Marshall and Cunliffe on the right balanced well. An accomplished player Cunliffe, with a knack of being in the right place, easy of access from his comrades, ever ready to take or give a pass to an inch, deliberate and careful sometimes, but apt to quicken into sudden fire near your goal with a ten yards rush and a cross shot. He made good openings, too, for Marshall, a more than useful wing man who could put on full steam in the nick of time, and rarely overran or lost the ball. Taken all round, a proper, high-class team, and at its best fit for anything.



From a Photo. by] PORTSMOUTH. *[Reinhold, Thiele, & Co.*

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October

By E. D. Cuming and J. A. Shepherd.

"That was a gun! Some cat or stoat who scught us
Has paid the debt that all such vermin owe.
Think what you'd feel supposing he had caught us
And cease to shake your stick and bid us go!

"Another gun! You really don't expect us
To face the perils of this wood alone;
You know it is your duty to protect us,
You're only joking when you say 'Begone'!"

THE First of October brings a rude awakening for the young pheasant brought up by hand; for though shooting-parties are events of the future, birds are wanted for the market, and he who heretofore held the gamekeeper his own familiar friend, bound to him by patent foods, raisins, and a hundred tender ties, is sorely puzzled by the change in his affairs:—

"What have we done? We came
as you have taught us
Blessings and buckwheat seek-
ing at your hand.
Now, crowding round to see what
you have brought us,
We're driven from you like
some outcast banned.

Time was when the pheasant was reared to have his neck wrung like any tame villatic fowl: his lot on the whole is pleasanter nowadays. The 2nd of October ushers in the season of peace to English and Welsh trout in the majority of rivers: the soul of the Scottish trout must be consumed with bitterness when he considers the favouritism which accords a season of rest to the southern trout and denies the same to him. The hard case of the Scottish trout justifies appeal to Parliament, the more so because the breeding season is now begun:



DESERTED—"WHAT HAVE WE DONE?"

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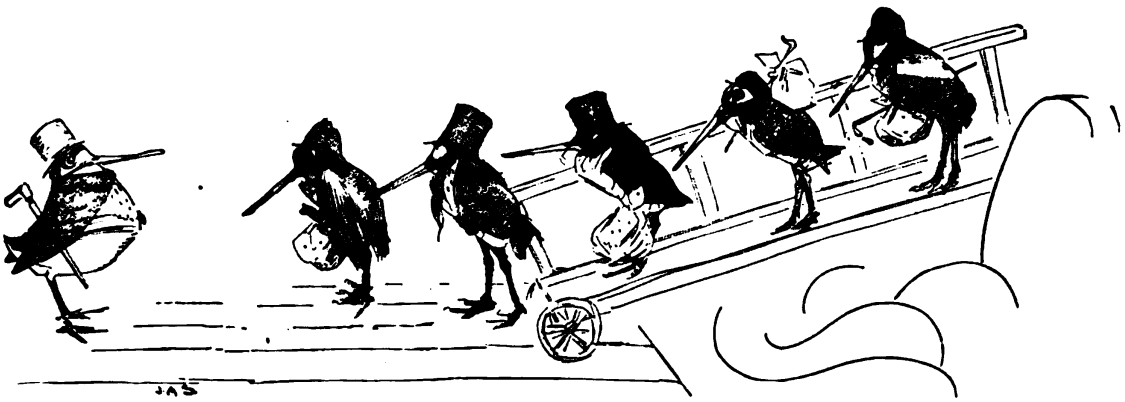


"A TROUT WITH A GRIEVANCE."

in some few streams the trout are already married, but the matrimonial movement reaches full swing in October and goes on all through winter till February.

Migration continues and reaches its height this month: return to us the woodcock, who, for the sake of journeying in company, lay aside their solitary habit and come in flocks under cover of night; but no sooner do they reach land than they hastily bid one another good-bye and scatter in all directions. The snipe come, too, and take up their quarters in bogs, marshes, and similar damp, delectable places; they are so thin and hungry on arrival that fat, well-to-do resident snipe might object to them as pauper aliens. The poor immigrants do not take long to recover themselves: in a week they are as plump as the best, and grow so capricious and restless you are never sure of finding them for two days together in the same place.

Old golden plover, delayed after their children's departure by the necessity for getting their winter suits, arrive in flocks and settle down. Golden plover are very talkative birds: light sleepers, you may hear them on the darkest night chattering in low tones in the ploughed fields where they love to roost; on bright moonlight nights they do not go to bed at all, but stay up feasting on the seashore. They are bosom friends of the starlings, who chum with them in winter, and no doubt show them where the largest and best stocks of grubs and edibles are to be found. The geese, pink-footed, bean, and grey lag, come back to us. They don't time their departure from the north to arrive by night. Mr. Millais saw them one autumn day arriving on Loch Leven: they descended from the upper ether as down a spiral stairway, having made their journey at an immense height in the air. The same observer has watched wild geese feeding at close quarters: they posted sentries on the outskirts of the flock, and when a sentry thought he had done his turn of duty he went and stirred up another goose, the next on the roster, and, having told him the pass-word and given over his orders, began feeding himself. The lapwings gather together in flocks: birds who thus congregate in winter have exceptional opportunities of cultivating acquaintances and arranging well-considered matches for next spring. The chaffinches don't do this: the hen birds declare they have had enough of the men for one year and assemble in large parties by themselves. The few cocks who join these feminine mass meetings no doubt sympathize with their views. Isolation does not appear to weigh heavily on the deserted males; they are as sprightly and cheerful in winter as in summer.



"PAUPER ALIENS."

The weather grows wet and chilly, and the rats, disgusted with the discomforts of country

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"AN OPEN VERDICT IS ALWAYS RETURNED."

life, shut up their summer residences and "come up to town"—to the outhouses and drains—to spend the winter.

It is about this time that the coroner's work among the shrews becomes so heavy; numbers of this quarrelsome community are found lying dead all over the country in autumn. An open verdict is always returned: the body of deceased bears no marks of violence; there is nothing to show that he owes his death to the wide antipathies of his kin; and human science so far has done nothing to elucidate the mystery which baffles the shrew coroner's jury. In the good old days people explained it easily enough; dead shrews, they pointed out with truth, were always found on a road (they were, and are, to be found elsewhere, of course, if you look), demonstrating to finality that they were constitutionally unable to go across a road in the autumn, and that the attempt to do so proved fatal. Mr. Topsell no doubt had the autumnal plenty of dead shrews in mind when he impressed upon his readers that the remedy prepared from its tail for "the sores of any man which came by the biting of a greedy and ravenous dog" depended for its infallibility on the shrew being alive when its tail was cut off.

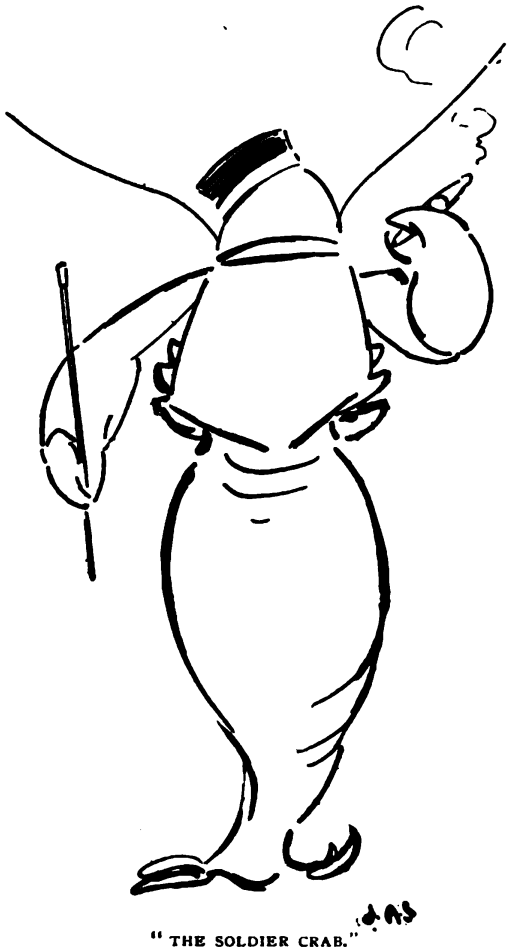
The haddock's wistful gaze and that of the whiting encounters your eye roving over the fishmonger's slab, for this month finds these fish, among others, at their best. It was the haddock, so legend runneth, from whose mouth St. Peter obtained the money necessary to pay the tax-gatherer; the fish must have wriggled a good deal, for the apostle pinched him so hard that the haddock bears the marks of his finger and thumb on his shoulders to this day. But for these tokens we should not know it was the haddock who furnished that coin.

The humble, succulent whelk is devoting her attention to family affairs. The whelk deposits her eggs in a mass (which sailors are said to use as soap on occasion) and thinks no more about them.



"THE WISTFUL HADDOCK COMES TO LONDON."

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"THE SOLDIER CRAB."

She has indeed enough to think about when the hermit crab is around. Nature dealt cruelly with the soldier or hermit crab, arming him with mail in front and leaving him soft and vulnerable behind. Hence this crab rectifies Nature's omission with his own right claw and shelters the unprotected end of his person in a shell; his tail being thoughtfully supplied with hooks so that he can keep hold of it. If he can find an empty shell that fits he takes that; if he can't he turns out the rightful owner by force of arms; whence one of his popular names: and sits lonely in the purloined dwelling wrapped in claws and contemplation; whence his other popular name:—

He had "got his discharge," was a "beggar at large,"
And he wanted a suitable dwelling,
So he knocked at a shell which he saw would do well
If the tenant would leave at his telling.
But the whelk, who was stout, said he wouldn't come out
Whatever the soldier might do;
"Is it not," he said, "fudge to suppose I shall budge
For a stalk-eyed crustacean like you?"
Then the soldier arose, and he seized by the nose
His sturdy, but feeble, old victim.
Holding Queensberry rules binding only on fools,
He thumped him, and pinched him, and kicked him.
But it boots not to tell of the fight for the shell,
And how might gave the palm to the sinner.
When the battle was done, and the soldier had won,
He sat down to dead whelk for his dinner.
So you see it's a flaw in a natural law
(Or whatever it please you to term it)
Lets that soldier get in and grow fat in his sin,
And, far worse, be revered as a "hermit."

The authorities are not agreed whether the soldier eats the evicted whelk. Let him have the benefit of the doubt, as he must be hungry after the fight. Mr. P. Rufford once saw a small soldier hauled out of a shell which was too big for him by jealous neighbours. A big one seized him by the claw and another held on to the shell, and when they two failed to drag him out a third came along and helped to haul on the shell. Which points to high intelligence as well as low principles in the hermit crab.

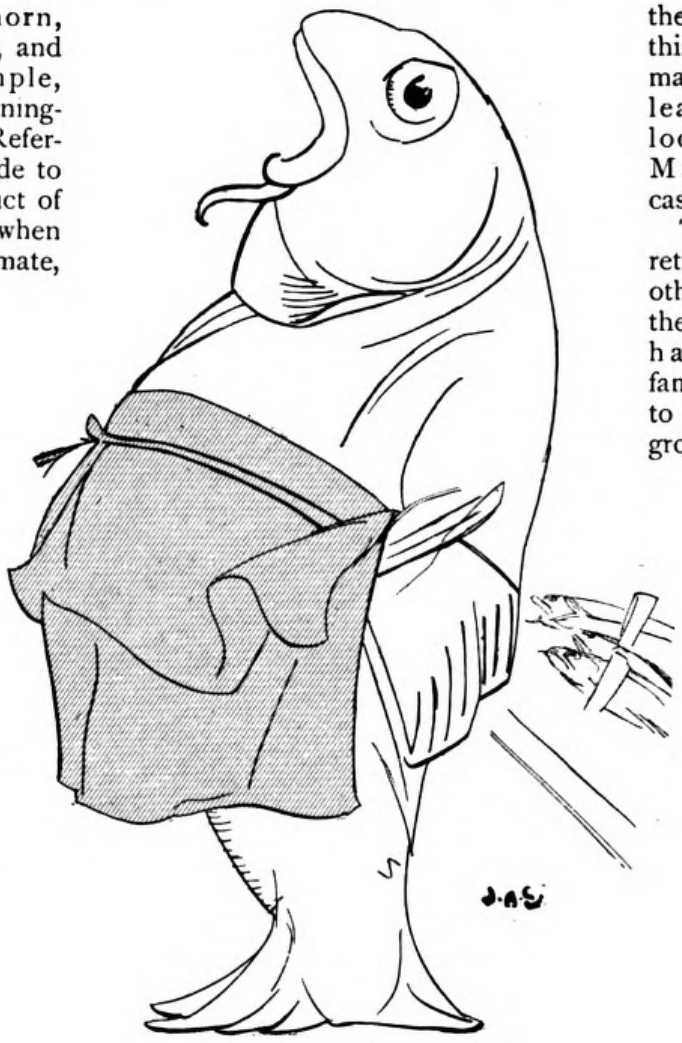
The unlovely skate is in season: the female skate is an unrecognised friend of childhood on the beach, as it is she who provides the "pixy purses," those little leathery black cases with a handle at each corner which strew the seashore in summer. The skate puts her eggs in these purses with an eye to their greater safety. The dog-fish makes a purse like the skate's, but furnished with longer handles. The cod is now in his prime: a fish with such a magnificent digestion as the cod ought always to be in the most flourishing health: he disposes of a crab, shell and all, almost as easily as he does of his own and other fishes' tender children. The salmon in many rivers, the Scottish Dee,



"WRAPPED IN CLAWS AND CONTEMPLATION."

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the Spey, Findhorn, Helmsdale, Tweed, and Severn, for example, arrive on the spawning-beds in October. Reference has been made to the heartless conduct of the hen salmon when bereaved of her mate, but, truth to tell, the cock's behaviour has little to recommend it. When his wife has finished putting her eggs in the trench, which she dug without a tail's turn of assistance from him, he lets her go without a sigh, and loafs about quite ready to marry the next hen salmon that comes along; if she bring a husband with her he picks a quarrel with him.



"THE COD IS NOW IN HIS PRIME."

The gudgeon, though considered always fit for the table, is at his best now. The gudgeon is a fish of restful and pensive disposition and will lie still for hours together. A century and a half ago, or less, the gudgeon suffered from the reputation he had as a cure for consumption: the patient had to swallow him alive.

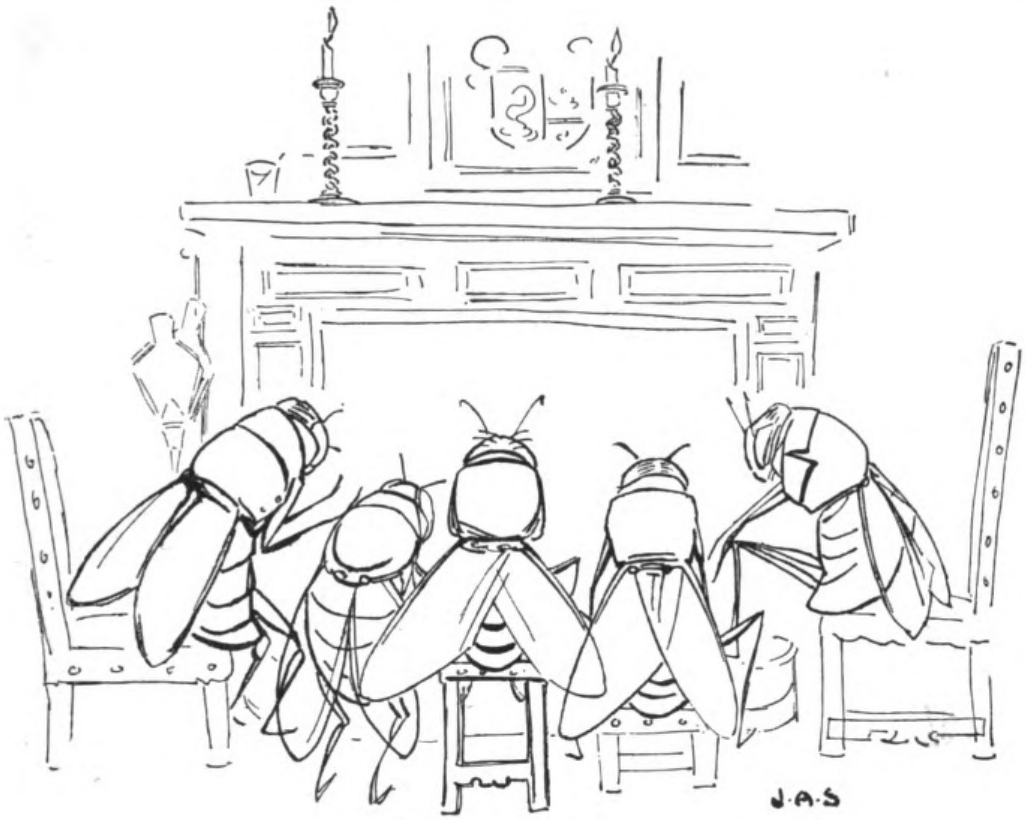
The quail, who for many years past has been developing anti-British views, attributable to the spread of cultivation and consequent disappearance of the rough grass lands wherein she delights, leaves us for the south in October. A few apparently mean to be faithful to us throughout the winter, but their fidelity is regulated by the temperature: if the barometer is falling and the thermometer is low at this season, the quails make no apology for leaving. "By-bye; look you up next May," they say, casually, and go.



"THE QUEEN BEE RETIRES."

The bumble-bees retire: the males and others to their graves; the queen bees, who have to produce families next spring, to their beds underground or elsewhere. The ants, having collected the usual supply of aphis eggs which will hatch out next spring to be the spoiled pets of the colony, shut their doors and pull down the blinds. The outside of the ant-heap suggests that it is deserted: that there ought to be a notice up, "Keys with," etc.; but the place is not to let: the ants have merely gone to bed for the winter. The field cricket puts up his shutters and goes to bed too; if, indeed, he has not gone sooner, for he made an end of singing in August, and if he went to bed then few people would be much the wiser. The flies on the window are beginning to grow stiff and tottery, but warm rooms discourage thoughts of bed just yet, and they remain out to enjoy the climate produced by fire and gas; while the wasps, all but the queens, whose duty to the species keeps them alive, creep away into hiding to die off unmourned. The dragon-fly's eggs now produce the spidery nymphs which dwell on the mud of the stream-bed throughout

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"THE FLIES SIT UP A LITTLE LONGER."

the winter: which situation the nymph must find dull.

The robin breaks up his establishment, divorces his wife, and drives away his children, who are now quite able to look after themselves. Some of our robins winter abroad, but the wiser remain with us. Many robins born in Northern Europe go to Italy for the cold months; but not all of them come back. The Italians have no sentiment about the robin, and eat him in scores — as indeed they do any other small bird who is injudicious enough to give them the chance.

The days grow shorter and colder, and the elderly dormouse, measuring with critic's eye his autumnal rotundity, lights his bedroom candle, so to speak, and trots off:—

When I was young and hale and rather festive
I never was in haste to go to bed;
I never thought to seek the sleep digestive
Until November days were done and dead
When I was young.

Now I am old and stiff and very sober
I count me gay to venture out to tea;
And rheumatism comes in mid-October
To hint that bed's the proper place for me
Now I am old.

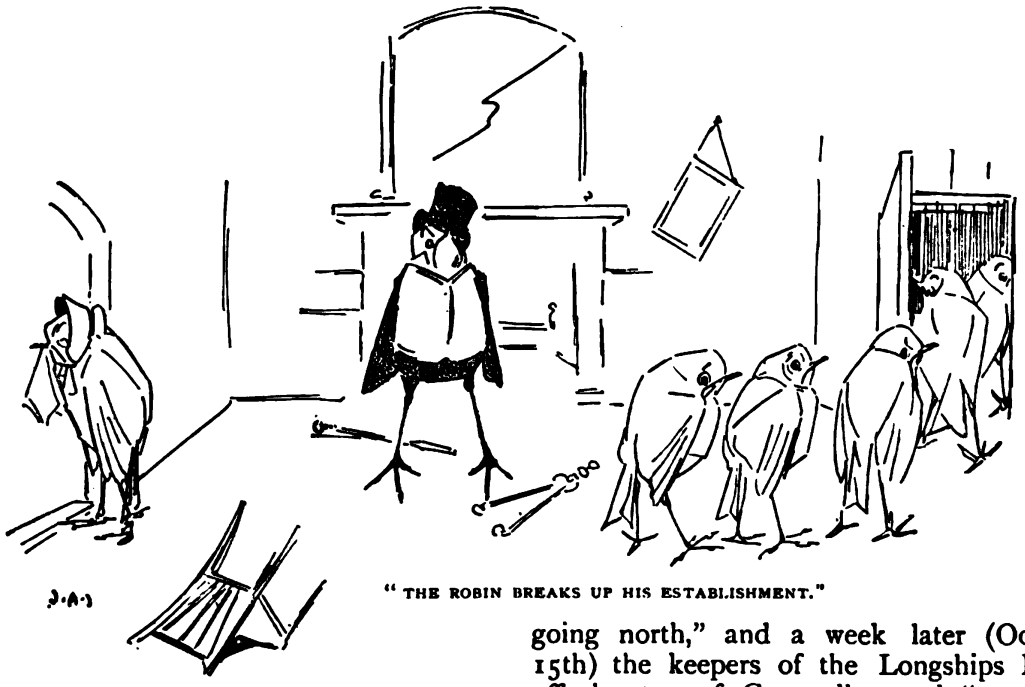


"UNMOURNED."

Poor old dormouse! it is hard to feel the weight of advancing months and have to go to bed six weeks before your own sons, whose higher vitality enables them to stay up and enjoy themselves so much longer.

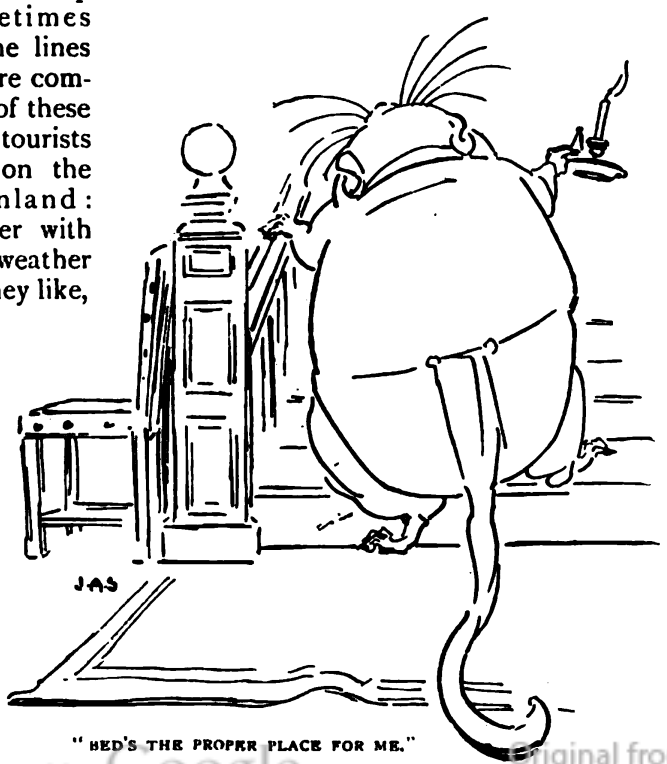
The Bird Emigration Office is open all day and all night now; an elaborate series of observations, made by the keepers of light-

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"THE ROBIN BREAKS UP HIS ESTABLISHMENT."

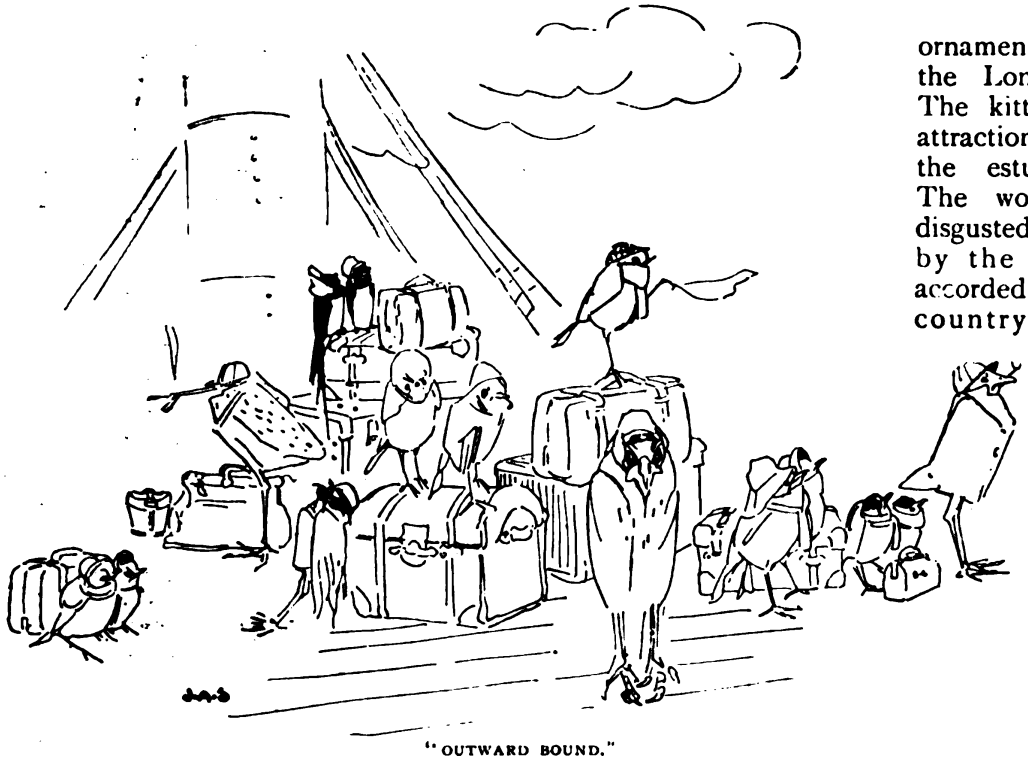
houses and lightships all round the coast of Britain, has shown us in which directions the birds move at all seasons of the year, but their movements in October are perplexing. At this season, for example, skylarks in enormous flocks, vast flights of rooks, sparrows, robins, chaffinches, greenfinches, and starlings, among other species, are arriving on our eastern shores from a south-easterly direction—Holland, Belgium, and France—and going *northward* up the coast, sometimes actually crossing the lines of travellers who are coming *south!* Many of these northward-bound tourists leave their party on the way and turn inland: perhaps they winter with us; perhaps, if the weather turns colder than they like, they book their passages for the south and move on again. But how are we to explain such items as this? On October 9th the keepers of the Rhinns of Islay Light, on the west coast of Scotland, recorded "thousands of puffins going north," and a week later (October 15th) the keepers of the Longships Light, off the toe of Cornwall, noted "scores of puffins going south all day." And while the keepers of the lights on the east and south-east coasts of England are recording the arrival of great flocks of skylarks from the Continent daily, they of Holyhead are noting the arrival of great flocks of skylarks from Ireland. It would really seem as though England were a sort of central tourist depôt whither birds from all parts come to decide where they shall pass the winter.



"BED'S THE PROPER PLACE FOR ME."

The bird-catcher is abroad at this season all over Europe, and his nets save huge numbers of birds the trouble of making winter arrangements. Last October, between the 10th and 14th of the month, the three keepers of the Cape Gris-Nez Light, a few miles south of Calais, caught over 5,900 birds, chiefly larks, thrushes, and corncrakes. The light attracts the birds, nets do the rest; and on this occasion the law stepped in and obtained details

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"OUTWARD BOUND."

and a fine of fifty francs or thereabouts. In France, Belgium, and Germany the blackbirds and thrushes arrive in such numbers that the bird-catchers make their capture a regular industry during the migration movement; but before we criticise we must remark the strings and festoons of larks in our own poulterers' and game-dealers' shops.

Thousands of birds of all species kill themselves against the glass of the lights in the passage across the Channel and North Sea, but when making a really long journey they travel at an immense height. An astronomer once saw birds and identified the species against the moon, on which his telescope was turned. They were, he estimated, two miles above the earth. On fine nights the birds travel in silence; on dark or misty nights they call continually to one another, no doubt with the object of maintaining touch.

The black-headed gulls take off the brown hoods, which they do not wear in winter, and assemble in estuaries and tidal waters. If it be stormy they come inland, and of late years it has become increasingly fashionable in a certain section of black-headed gull society to spend the winter months on the ornamental waters in the London parks. The kittiwakes find attractions high up the estuaries also. The wood-pigeon, disgusted, perhaps, by the treatment accorded him in the country districts, where the sportsman adds insult to injury by putting him down under "Various" in the game book after shooting him, sometimes takes up his residence in town. The Londoners make much of him, and his reception in the parks compares more than favourably with that he gets in the cornfields—which is not surprising when you remember that 1,020 grains of corn have been taken out of one wood-pigeon's crop:—

At first the sparrows marvelled that a bird so highly bred
Should condescend to mix with them "as pleasant as could be";
"'E oughter 'ave 'is country 'ouse and privit park," they said;
"An' 'ere 'e is a-pickin' crumbs the same as you an' me!
"'E seems a decent feller, too, for all 'is swagger clo's;
I wonder might us take 'im roun' and show 'im all the sights;
There's a sparrer on the keb-ra k as tells me as 'e knows—
Leastways, a keb-'or e told 'im—where the swells is drove o' nights."

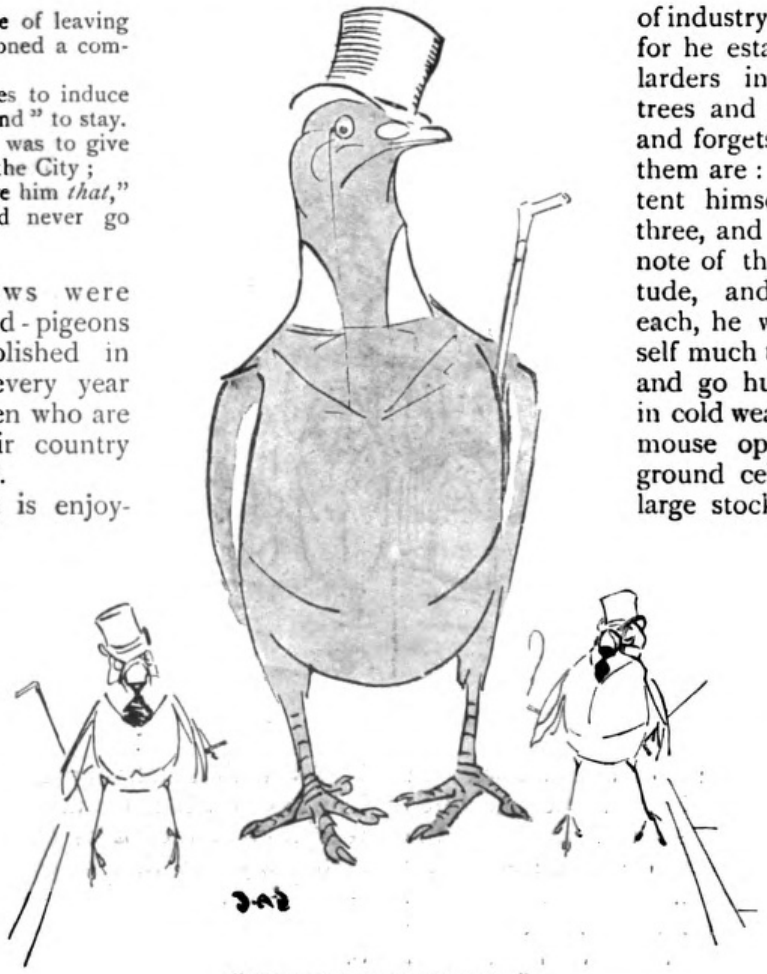
Th· pigeon said "With pleasure!" so they showed him round the town
One morning very early when the world was in its tub,
And begged him very earnestly to get his name put down
For "'lection" to the Bachelors', or White's, or Boodle's Club.



"TO A SKYLARK!"

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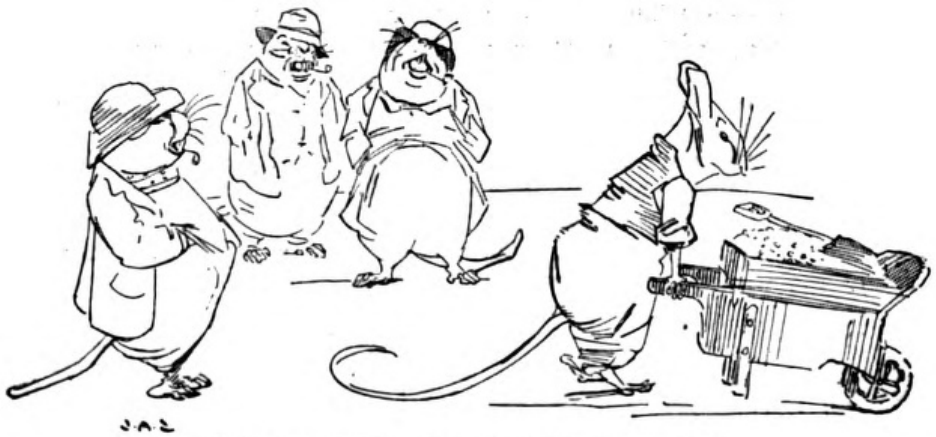
And when he spoke of leaving
town they summoned a com-
mittee
To ponder measures to induce
their "noble friend" to stay.
A happy thought it was to give
the Freedom of the City;
"If we should give him *that*,"
they said, 'he'd never go
away."



"THE FREEDOM OF THE CITY."

The sparrows were right; the wood-pigeons are quite established in London, and every year bring up children who are as tame as their country cousins are wild.

The nuthatch is enjoying himself now the hazel nuts are ripe; he might try for a month to break a nut with his unaided beak, but he knows his limitations and is far too wise to waste time and trouble that way. He selects a nut with the skill of an expert, wedges it carefully into some crack in branch or gate-post, and converts his whole person into a pick-axe, bringing all his strength to bear on the blows he gives with the tip of his beak. The squirrel is very busy collecting nuts, acorns, and beechmast and storing the same: he is a glaring example of industry without method, for he establishes a dozen larders in holes in the trees and in the ground, and forgets where most of them are: were he to content himself with two or three, and make a careful note of the latitude, longitude, and elevation of each, he would save himself much trouble hereafter and go hungry less often in cold weather. The field-mouse opens his underground cellar and collects large stocks of grain and sundries: beans, peas, acorns, beechmast—anything that will keep. His winter quarters are generally made under a corn-stack or in a burrow; but occasionally a field-mouse of unusual originality takes an old bird's nest and fits it up to suit his needs. The field-vole loafs about with his hands in his pockets and a straw in his mouth and jeers at his hard-working cousin at this season; the vole does not lay up a winter store: he finds it pleasanter to sleep through the cold weather.



"THE LOAFING VOLE AND THE INDUSTRIOUS MOUSE."

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The Sorceress of the Strand.

By L. T. Meade and Robert Eustace.

STORY I.—MADAME SARA.

EVERYONE in trade and a good many who are not have heard of Werner's Agency, the Solvency Inquiry Agency of all British trade. Its business is to know the financial condition of all wholesale and retail firms, from Rothschild's to the smallest sweetstuff shop in Whitechapel. I do not say that every firm figures on its books, but by methods of secret inquiry it can discover the status of any firm or individual. It is the great safeguard to British trade and prevents much fraudulent dealing.

Of this agency I, Dixon Druce, was appointed manager in 1890. Since then I have met queer people and seen strange sights, for men do curious things for money in this world.

It so happened that in June, 1899, my business took me to Madeira on an inquiry of some importance. I left the island on the 14th of the month by the *Norham Castle* for Southampton. I got on board after dinner. It was a lovely night, and the strains of the band in the public gardens of Funchal came floating across the star-powdered bay through the warm, balmy air. Then the engine bells rang to "Full speed ahead," and, flinging a farewell to the fairest island on earth, I turned to the smoking-room in order to light my cheroot.



"DO YOU WANT A MATCH, SIR?"

"Do you want a match, sir?"

The voice came from a slender, young-looking man who stood near the taffrail. Before I could reply he had struck one and held it out to me.

"Excuse me," he said, as he tossed it overboard, "but surely I am addressing Mr. Dixon Druce?"

"You are, sir," I said, glancing keenly back at him, "but you have the advantage of me."

"Don't you know me?" he responded. "Jack Selby, Hayward's House, Harrow, 1879."

"By Jove! so it is," I cried.

Our hands met in a warm clasp, and a moment later I found myself sitting close to my old friend, who had fagged for me in the bygone days, and whom I had not seen from the moment when I said good-bye to the "Hill" in the grey mist of a December morning twenty years ago. He was a boy of fourteen then, but nevertheless I recognised him. His face was bronzed and good-looking, his features refined. As a boy Selby had been noted for his grace, his well-shaped head, his clean-cut features; these characteristics still were his, and although he was now slightly past his first youth he was decidedly handsome. He gave me a quick sketch of his history.

"My father left me plenty of money," he said, "and The Meadows, our old family place, is now mine. I have a taste for natural history; that taste took me two years ago to South America. I have had my share of strange adventures, and have collected valuable specimens and trophies. I am now on my way home from Para, on the Amazon, having come by a Booth boat to Madeira and changed there to the Castle Line. But why all this talk about myself?" he added, bringing his deck-chair a little nearer to mine. "What about your history, old chap? Are you settled down with a wife and kiddies of your own, or is that dream of your school days fulfilled, and are you the owner of the best private laboratory in London?"

"As to the laboratory," I said, with a

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smile, "you must come and see it. For the rest I am unmarried. Are you?"

"I was married the day before I left Para, and my wife is on board with me."

"Capital," I answered. "Let me hear all about it."

"You shall. Her maiden name was Dallas; Beatrice Dallas. She is just twenty now. Her father was an Englishman and her mother a Spaniard; neither parent is living. She has an elder sister, Edith, nearly thirty years of age, unmarried, who is on board with us. There is also a step-brother, considerably older than either Edith or Beatrice. I met my wife last year in Para, and at once fell in love. I am the happiest man on earth. It goes without saying that I think her beautiful, and she is also very well off. The story of her wealth is a curious one. Her uncle on the mother's side was an extremely wealthy Spaniard, who made an enormous fortune in Brazil out of diamonds and minerals; he owned several mines. But it is supposed that his wealth turned his brain. At any rate, it seems to have done so as far as the disposal of his money went. He divided the yearly profits and interest between his nephew and his two nieces, but declared that the property itself should never be split up. He has left the whole of it to that one of the three who should survive the others. A perfectly insane arrangement, but not, I believe, unprecedented in Brazil."

"Very insane," I echoed. "What was he worth?"

"Over two million sterling."

"By Jove!" I cried, "what a sum! But what about the half-brother?"

"He must be over forty years of age, and is evidently a bad lot. I have never seen him. His sisters won't speak to him or have anything to do with him. I understand that he is a great gambler; I am further told that he is at present in England, and, as there are certain technicalities to be gone through before the girls can fully enjoy their incomes, one of the first things I must do when I get home is to find him out. He has to sign certain papers, for we sha'n't be able to put things straight until we get his whereabouts. Some time ago my wife and Edith heard that he was ill, but dead or alive we must know all about him, and as quickly as possible."

I made no answer, and he continued:—

"I'll introduce you to my wife and sister-in-law to-morrow. Beatrice is quite a child compared to Edith, who acts towards her almost like a mother. Bee is a little beauty, so fresh and round and young-looking. But Edith is handsome, too, although I sometimes think she is as vain as a peacock. By the way, Druce, this brings me to another part of my story. The sisters have an acquaintance on board, one of the most remarkable women I have ever met. She goes by the name of Madame Sara, and knows London well. In fact, she confesses to having a shop in the Strand. What she has been doing in Brazil I do not know, for she keeps all her affairs strictly private. But you will be amazed when I tell you what her calling is."

"What?" I asked.

"A professional beautifier. She claims the privilege of restoring youth to those who consult her. She also declares that she can make quite ugly people handsome. There is no doubt that she is very clever. She knows a little bit of everything, and has wonderful recipes with regard to medicines, surgery, and dentistry. She is a most lovely woman herself, very fair, with blue eyes, an innocent, childlike manner, and quantities of rippling gold hair. She openly confesses that she is very much older than she appears. She looks about five-and-twenty. She seems to have travelled all over the world, and says that by birth she is a mixture of Indian and Italian, her father having been Italian and her mother Indian. Accompanying her is an Arab, a handsome, picturesque sort of fellow, who gives her the most absolute devotion, and she is also bringing back to England two Braziiians from Para. This woman deals in all sorts of curious secrets, but principally in cosmetics. Her shop in the Strand could, I fancy, tell many a strange history. Her clients go to her there, and she does what is necessary for them. It is a fact that she occasionally performs small surgical operations, and there is not a dentist in London who can vie with her. She confesses quite naïvely that she holds some secrets for making false teeth cling to the palate that no one knows of. Edith Dallas is devoted to her—in fact, her adoration amounts to idolatry."

"You give a very brilliant account of this woman," I said. "You must introduce me to morrow."

"I will," answered Jack, with a smile. "I should like your opinion of her. I am right glad I have met you, Druce, it is like old times. When we get to London I mean to put up at my town house in Eaton Square for the remainder of the season. The Meadows shall be re-furnished, and Bee and

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I will take up our quarters some time in August; then you must come and see us. But I am afraid before I give myself up to mere pleasure I must find that precious brother-in-law, Henry Joachim Silva."

"If you have any difficulty apply to me," I said. "I can put at your disposal, in an unofficial way, of course, agents who would find almost any man in England, dead or alive."

I then proceeded to give Selby a short account of my own business.

"Thanks," he said, presently, "that is capital. You are the very man we want."

The next morning after breakfast Jack introduced me to his wife and sister-in-law. They were both foreign-looking, but very handsome, and the wife in particular had a graceful and uncommon appearance.

We had been chatting about five minutes when I saw coming down the deck a slight, rather small woman, wearing a big sun hat.

"Ah, Madame," cried Selby, "here you are. I had the luck to meet an old friend on board—Mr. Dixon Druce—and I have been telling him all about you. I should like you to know each other. Druce, this lady is Madame Sara, of whom I have spoken to you. Mr. Dixon Druce—Madame Sara."

She bowed gracefully and then looked at me earnestly. I had seldom seen a more lovely woman. By her side both Mrs. Selby and her sister seemed to fade into insignificance. Her complexion was almost dazzlingly fair, her face refined in expression, her eyes penetrating, clever, and yet with the innocent, frank gaze of a child. Her dress was very simple; she looked altogether like a young, fresh, and natural girl.

As we sat chatting lightly and about commonplace topics, I instinctively felt that she took an interest in me even greater than might be evinced from an ordinary introduction. By slow degrees she so turned the conversation as to leave Selby and his wife and sister out, and then as they moved away she came a little nearer, and said in a low voice:—

"I am very glad we have met, and yet how odd this meeting is! Was it really accidental?"

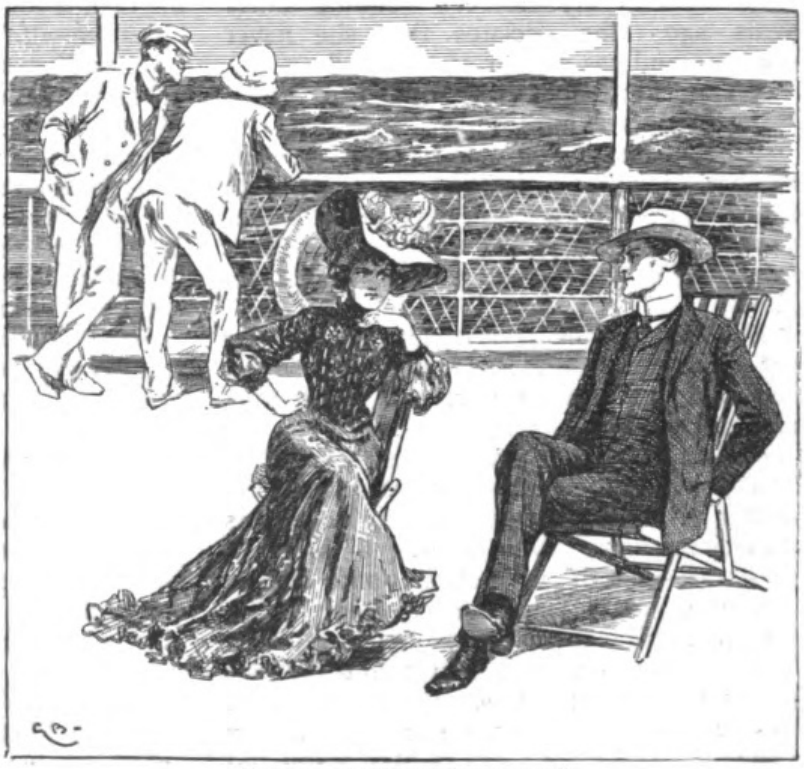
"I do not understand you," I answered.

"I know who you are," she said, lightly. "You are the manager of Werner's Agency; its business is to know the private affairs of those people who would rather keep their own secrets. Now, Mr. Druce, I am going to be absolutely frank with you. I own a small shop in the Strand—it is a perfumery shop—and behind those innocent-looking doors I conduct that business which brings me in gold of the realm. Have you, Mr. Druce, any objection to my continuing to make a livelihood in perfectly innocent ways?"

"None whatever," I answered. "You puzzle me by alluding to the subject."

"I want you to pay my shop a visit when you come to London. I have been away for three or four months. I do wonders for my clients, and they pay me largely for my services. I hold some perfectly innocent secrets which I cannot confide to anybody. I have obtained them partly from the Indians and partly from the natives of Brazil. I have lately been in Para to inquire into certain methods by which my trade can be improved."

"And your trade is——?" I said, looking at her with amusement and some surprise.



"'I AM A BEAUTIFIER,' SHE SAID."

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"I am a beautifier," she said, lightly. She looked at me with a smile. "You don't want me yet, Mr. Druce, but the time may come when even you will wish to keep back the infirmities of years. In the meantime can you guess my age?"

"I will not hazard a guess," I answered.

"And I will not tell you. Let it remain a secret. Meanwhile, understand that my calling is quite an open one, and I do hold secrets. I should advise you, Mr. Druce, even in your professional capacity, not to interfere with them."

The childlike expression faded from her face as she uttered the last words. There seemed to ring a sort of challenge in her tone. She turned away after a few moments and I rejoined my friends.

"You have been making acquaintance with Madame Sara, Mr. Druce," said Mrs. Selby. "Don't you think she is lovely?"

"She is one of the most beautiful women I have ever seen," I answered, "but there seems to be a mystery about her."

"Oh, indeed there is," said Edith Dallas, gravely.

"She asked me if I could guess her age," I continued. "I did not try, but surely she cannot be more than five-and-twenty."

"No one knows her age," said Mrs. Selby, "but I will tell you a curious fact, which, perhaps, you will not believe. She was bridesmaid at my mother's wedding thirty years ago. She declares that she never changes, and has no fear of old age."

"You mean that seriously?" I cried. "But surely it is impossible?"

"Her name is on the register, and my mother knew her well. She was mysterious then, and I think my mother got into her power, but of that I am not certain. Anyhow, Edith and I adore her, don't we, Edie?"

She laid her hand affectionately on her sister's arm. Edith Dallas did not speak, but her face was careworn. After a time she said, slowly:—

"Madame Sara is uncanny and terrible."

There is, perhaps, no business imaginable — not even a lawyer's — that engenders suspicions more than mine. I hate all mysteries — both in persons and things. Mysteries are my natural enemies; I felt now that this woman was a distinct mystery. That she was interested in me I did not doubt, perhaps because she was afraid of me.

The rest of our voyage passed pleasantly enough. The more I saw of Mrs. Selby and her sister the more I liked them. They were quiet, simple, and straightforward. I felt sure that they were both as good as gold.

We parted at Waterloo, Jack and his wife and her sister going to Jack's house in Eaton Square, and I returning to my quarters in St. John's Wood. I had a house there, with a long garden, at the bottom of which was my laboratory, the laboratory that was the pride of my life, it being, I fondly considered, the best private laboratory in London. There I spent all my spare time making experiments and trying this chemical combination and the other, living in hopes of doing great things some day, for Werner's Agency was not to be the end of my career. Nevertheless, it interested me thoroughly, and I was not sorry to get back to my commercial conundrums.

The next day, just before I started to go to my place of business, Jack Selby was announced.

"I want you to help me," he said. "I have been already trying in a sort of general way to get information about my brother-in-law, but all in vain. There is no such person in any of the directories. Can you put me on the road to discovery?"

I said I could and would if he would leave the matter in my hands.

"With pleasure," he replied. "You see how we are fixed up. Neither Edith nor Bee can get money with any regularity until the man is found. I cannot imagine why he hides himself."

"I will insert advertisements in the personal columns of the newspapers," I said, "and request anyone who can give information to communicate with me at my office. I will also give instructions to all the branches of my firm, as well as to my head assistants in London, to keep their eyes open for any news. You may be quite certain that in a week or two we shall know all about him."

Selby appeared cheered at this proposal, and, having begged of me to call upon his wife and her sister as soon as possible, took his leave.

On that very day advertisements were drawn up and sent to several newspapers and inquiry agents; but week after week passed without the slightest result. Selby got very fidgety at the delay. He was never happy except in my presence, and insisted on my coming, whenever I had time, to his house. I was glad to do so, for I took an interest both in him and his belongings, and as to Madame Sara I could not get her out of my head. One day Mrs. Selby said to me:—

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"Have you ever been to see Madame? I know she would like to show you her shop and general surroundings."

"I did promise to call upon her," I answered, "but have not had time to do so yet."

"Will you come with me to-morrow morning?" asked Edith Dallas, suddenly.

She turned red as she spoke, and the worried, uneasy expression became more marked on her face. I had noticed for some time that she had been looking both nervous and depressed. I had first observed this peculiarity about her on board the *Norham Castle*, but, as time went on, instead of lessening it grew worse. Her face for so young a woman was haggard; she started at each sound, and Madame Sara's name was never spoken in her presence without her evincing almost undue emotion.

"Will you come with me?" she said, with great eagerness.

I immediately promised, and the next day, about eleven o'clock, Edith Dallas and I found ourselves in a hansom driving to Madame Sara's shop. We reached it in a few minutes, and found an unpretentious little place wedged in between a hosier's on one side and a cheap print-seller's on the other. In the windows of the shop were pyramids of perfume bottles, with scintillating facet stoppers tied with coloured ribbons. We stepped out of the hansom and went indoors. Inside the shop were a couple of steps, which led to a door of solid mahogany.

"This is the entrance to her private house," said Edith, and she pointed to a small brass plate, on which was engraved the name —"Madame Sara, Parfumeuse."

Edith touched an electric bell and the door was immediately opened by a smartly-dressed page-boy. He looked at Miss Dallas as if he knew her very well, and said:—

"Madame is within, and is expecting you, miss."

He ushered us both into a quiet-looking room, soberly but handsomely furnished. He left us, closing the door. Edith turned to me.

"Do you know where we are?" she asked.

"We are standing at present in a small room just behind Madame Sara's shop," I answered. "Why are you so excited, Miss Dallas? What is the matter with you?"

"We are on the threshold of a magician's cave," she replied. "We shall soon be face to face with the most marvellous woman in the whole of London. There is no one like her."

"And you—fear her?" I said, dropping my voice to a whisper.

She started, stepped back, and with great difficulty recovered her composure. At that moment the page-boy returned to conduct us through a series of small waiting-rooms, and we soon found ourselves in the presence of Madame herself.

"Ah!" she said, with a smile. "This is delightful. You have kept your word, Edith, and I am greatly obliged to you. I will now show Mr. Druce some of the mysteries of my trade. But understand, sir," she added, "that I shall not tell you any of my real secrets, only as you would like to know something about me you shall."



"THIS IS MY SANCTUM SANCTORUM."

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"How can you tell I should like to know about you?" I asked.

She gave me an earnest glance which somewhat astonished me, and then she said:—

"Knowledge is power; don't refuse what I am willing to give. Edith, you will not object to waiting here while I show Mr. Druce through my rooms. First observe this room, Mr. Druce. It is lighted only from the roof. When the door shuts it automatically locks itself, so that any intrusion from without is impossible. This is my sanctum sanctorum—a faint odour of perfumes pervades the room. This is a hot day, but the room itself is cool. What do you think of it all?"

I made no answer. She walked to the other end and motioned to me to accompany her. There stood a polished oak square table, on which lay an array of extraordinary-looking articles and implements—stoppered bottles full of strange medicaments, mirrors, plane and concave, brushes, sprays, sponges, delicate needle-pointed instruments of bright steel, tiny lancets, and forceps. Facing this table was a chair, like those used by dentists. Above the chair hung electric lights in powerful reflectors, and lenses like bull's-eye lanterns. Another chair, supported on a glass pedestal, was kept there, Madame Sara informed me, for administering static electricity. There were dry-cell batteries for the continuous currents and induction coils for Faradic currents. There were also platinum needles for burning out the roots of hairs.

Madame took me from this room into another, where a still more formidable array of instruments were to be found. Here were a wooden operating-table and chloroform and ether apparatus. When I had looked at everything, she turned to me.

"Now you know," she said. "I am a doctor—perhaps a quack. These are my secrets. By means of these I live and flourish."

She turned her back on me and walked into the other room with the light, springy step of youth. Edith Dallas, white as a ghost, was waiting for us.

"You have done your duty, my child," said Madame. "Mr. Druce has seen just what I want him to see. I am very much obliged to you both. We shall meet to-night at Lady Farringdon's 'At-home.' Until then, farewell."

When we got into the street and were driving back again to Eaton Square, I turned to Edith.

"Many things puzzle me about your friend," I said, "but perhaps none more than this. By what possible means can a woman who owns to being the possessor of a shop obtain the *entrée* to some of the best houses in London? Why does Society open her doors to this woman, Miss Dallas?"

"I cannot quite tell you," was her reply. "I only know the fact that wherever she goes she is welcomed and treated with consideration, and wherever she fails to appear there is a universally expressed feeling of regret."

I had also been invited to Lady Farringdon's reception that evening, and I went there in a state of great curiosity. There was no doubt that Madame interested me. I was not sure of her. Beyond doubt there was a mystery attached to her, and also, for some unaccountable reason, she wished both to propitiate and defy me. Why was this?

I arrived early, and was standing in the crush near the head of the staircase when Madame was announced. She wore the richest white satin and quantities of diamonds. I saw her hostess bend towards her and talk eagerly. I noticed Madame reply and the pleased expression that crossed Lady Farringdon's face. A few minutes later a man with a foreign-looking face and long beard sat down before the grand piano. He played a light prelude and Madame Sara began to sing. Her voice was sweet and low, with an extraordinary pathos in it. It was the sort of voice that penetrates to the heart. There was an instant pause in the gay chatter. She sang amidst perfect silence, and when the song had come to an end there followed a *furore* of applause. I was just turning to say something to my nearest neighbour when I observed Edith Dallas, who was standing close by. Her eyes met mine; she laid her hand on my sleeve.

"The room is hot," she said, half panting as she spoke. "Take me out on the balcony."

I did so. The atmosphere of the reception-rooms was almost intolerable, but it was comparatively cool in the open air.

"I must not lose sight of her," she said, suddenly.

"Of whom?" I asked, somewhat astonished at her words.

"Of Sara."

"She is there," I said. "You can see her from where you stand."

We happened to be alone. I came a little closer.

"Why are you afraid of her?" I asked.

"Are you sure that we shall not be heard?" was her answer.

"Certain."

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"She terrifies me," were her next words.

"I will not betray your confidence, Miss Dallas. Will you not trust me? You ought to give me a reason for your fears."

"I cannot—I dare not; I have said far too much already. Don't keep me, Mr. Druce. She must not find us together."

As she spoke she pushed her way through the crowd, and before I could stop her was standing by Madame Sara's side.

The reception in Portland Place was, I remember, on the 26th of July. Two days later the Selbys were to give their final "At-home" before leaving for the country. I was, of course, invited to be present, and Madame was also there. She had never been dressed more splendidly, nor had she ever before looked younger or more beautiful. Wherever she went all eyes followed her. As a rule her dress was simple, almost like what a girl would wear, but to-night she chose rich Oriental stuffs made of many colours, and absolutely glittering with gems. Her golden hair was studded with diamonds. Round her neck she wore turquoise and diamonds mixed. There were many younger women in the room, but not the youngest nor the fairest had a chance beside Madame. It was not mere beauty of appearance, it was charm — charm which carries all before it.



"WHY ARE YOU AFRAID OF HER?"

I saw Miss Dallas, looking slim and tall and pale, standing at a little distance. I made my way to her side. Before I had time to speak she bent towards me.

"Is she not divine?" she whispered. "She bewilders and delights everyone. She is taking London by storm."

"Then you are not afraid of her to-night?" I said.

"I fear her more than ever. She has cast a spell over me. But listen, she is going to sing again."

I had not forgotten the song that Madame had given us at the Farringdons', and stood still to listen. There was a complete hush in the room. Her voice floated over the heads of the assembled guests in a dreamy Spanish song. Edith told me that it was a slumber song, and that Madame boasted of her power of putting almost anyone to sleep who listened to her rendering of it.

"She has many patients who suffer from insomnia," whispered the girl, "and she generally cures them with that song, and that alone. Ah! we must not talk; she will hear us."

Before I could reply Selby came hurrying up. He had not noticed Edith. He caught me by the arm.

"Come just for a minute into this window, Dixon," he said. "I must speak to you. I suppose you have no news with regard to my brother-in-law?"

"Not a word," I answered.

"To tell you the truth, I am getting terribly put out over the matter. We cannot settle any of our money affairs just because this man chooses to lose himself. My wife's lawyers wired to Brazil yesterday, but even his bankers do not know anything about him."

"The whole thing is a question of time," was my answer. "When are you off to Hampshire?"

"On Saturday."

As Selby said the last words he looked around him, then he dropped his voice.

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"I want to say something else. The more I see"—he nodded towards Madame Sara—"the less I like her. Edith is getting into a very strange state. Have you not noticed it? And the worst of it is my wife is also infected. I suppose it is that dodge of the woman's for patching people up and making them beautiful. Doubtless the temptation is overpowering in the case of a plain woman, but Beatrice is beautiful herself and young. What can she have to do with cosmetics and complexion pills?"

"You don't mean to tell me that your wife has consulted Madame Sara as a doctor?"

"Not exactly, but she has gone to her about her teeth. She complained of tooth-ache lately, and Madame's dentistry is renowned. Edith is constantly going to her for one thing or another, but then Edith is infatuated."

As Jack said the last words he went over to speak to someone else, and before I could leave the seclusion of the window I perceived Edith Dallas and Madame Sara in earnest conversation together. I could not help overhearing the following words:—

"Don't come to me to-morrow. Get into the country as soon as you can. It is far and away the best thing to do."

As Madame spoke she turned swiftly and caught my eye. She bowed, and the peculiar look, the sort of challenge, she had before given me flashed over her face. It made me uncomfortable, and during the night that followed I could not get it out of my head. I remembered what Selby had said with regard to his wife and her money affairs. Beyond doubt he had married into a mystery—a mystery that Madame Sara knew all about. There was a very big money interest, and strange things happen when millions are concerned.

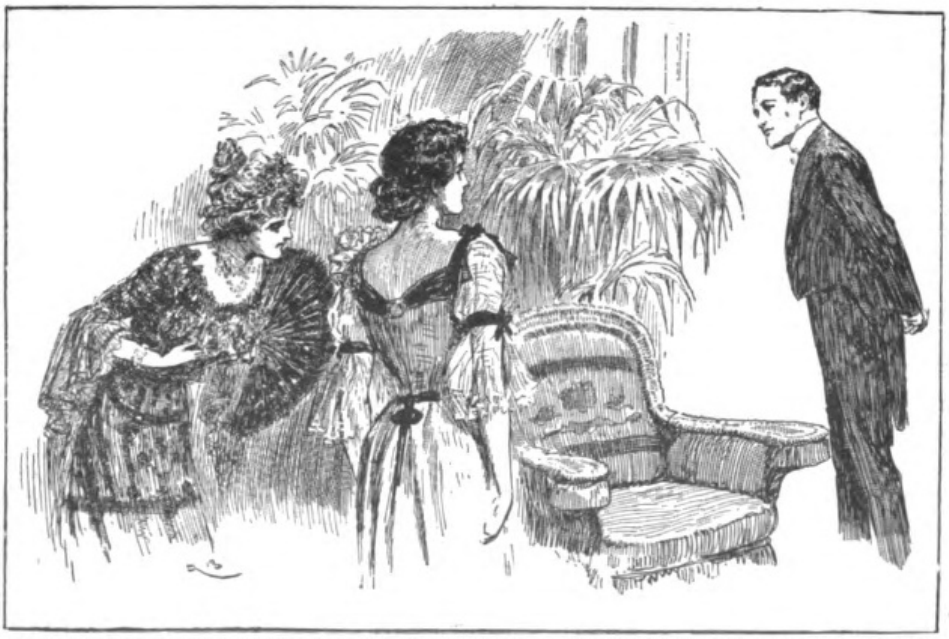
The next morning I had just risen and was sitting at breakfast when a note was handed to me. It came by special messenger, and was marked "Urgent." I tore it open. These were its contents:—

"My dear Druce,—A terrible blow has fallen on us. My sister-in-law, Edith, was taken suddenly ill this morning at breakfast. The nearest doctor was sent for, but he could do nothing, as she died half an hour ago. Do come and see me, and if you know any very clever specialist bring him with you. My wife is utterly stunned by the shock.—Yours, Jack Selby."

I read the note twice before I could realize what it meant. Then I rushed out and, hailing the first hansom I met, said to the man:—

"Drive to No. 192, Victoria Street, as quickly as you can."

Here lived a certain Mr. Eric Vandeleur, an old friend of mine and the police surgeon for the Westminster district, which included Eaton Square. No shrewder or sharper fellow existed than Vandeleur, and the present case was essentially in his province, both legally and professionally. He was not at his flat when I arrived, having already



"SHE BOWED, AND THE PECULIAR LOOK SHE HAD BEFORE GIVEN ME FLASHED OVER HER FACE."

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gone down to the court. Here I accordingly hurried, and was informed that he was in the mortuary.

For a man who, as it seemed to me, lived in a perpetual atmosphere of crime and violence, of death and coroners' courts, his habitual cheerfulness and brightness of manner were remarkable. Perhaps it was only the reaction from his work, for he had the reputation of being one of the most astute experts of the day in medical jurisprudence, and the most skilled analyst in toxicological cases on the Metropolitan Police staff. Before I could send him word that I wanted to see him I heard a door bang, and Vandeleur came hurrying down the passage, putting on his coat as he rushed along.

"Halloa!" he cried. "I haven't seen you for ages. Do you want me?"

"Yes, very urgently," I answered. "Are you busy?"

"Head over ears, my dear chap. I cannot give you a moment now, but perhaps later on."

"What is it? You look excited."

"I have got to go to Eaton Square like the wind, but come along, if you like, and tell me on the way."

"Capital," I cried. "The thing has been reported, then? You are going to Mr. Selby's, No. 34A; then I am going with you."

He looked at me in amazement.

"But the case has only just been reported. What can you possibly know about it?"

"Everything. Let us take this hansom, and I will tell you as we go along."

As we drove to Eaton Square I quickly explained the situation, glancing now and then at Vandeleur's bright, clean-shaven face. He was no longer Eric Vandeleur, the man with the latest club story and the merry twinkle in his blue eyes: he was Vandeleur the medical jurist, with a face like a mask, his lower jaw slightly protruding and features very fixed.

"This thing promises to be serious," he replied, as I finished, "but I can do nothing until after the autopsy. Here we are, and there is my man waiting for me; he has been smart."

On the steps stood an official-looking man in uniform, who saluted.

"Coroner's officer," explained Vandeleur.

We entered the silent, darkened house. Selby was standing in the hall. He came to meet us. I introduced him to Vandeleur, and he at once led us into the dining-room, where we found Dr. Osborne, whom Selby had called in when the alarm of Edith's illness had been first given. Dr. Osborne was a pale, under-sized, very young man. His face expressed considerable alarm. Vandeleur, however, managed to put him completely at his ease.

"I will have a chat with you in a few minutes, Dr. Osborne," he said; "but first I must get Mr. Selby's report. Will you please tell us, sir, exactly what occurred?"

"Certainly," he answered. "We had a reception here last night, and my sister-in-law did not go to bed until early morning; she was in bad spirits, but otherwise in her usual health. My wife went into her room after she was in bed, and told me later on that she had found Edith in hysterics, and could not get her to explain anything. We both talked about taking her to the country without delay. Indeed, our intention was to get off this afternoon."

"Well?" said Vandeleur.

"We had breakfast about half-past nine, and Miss Dallas came down, looking quite in her usual health, and in apparently good spirits. She ate with appetite, and, as it happened, she and my wife were both helped from the same dish. The meal had nearly come to an end when she jumped up from the table, uttered a sharp cry, turned very pale, pressed her hand to her side, and ran out of the room. My wife immediately followed her. She came back again in a minute or two, and said that Edith was in violent pain, and begged of me to send for a doctor. Dr. Osborne lives just round the corner. He came at once, but she died almost immediately after his arrival."

"You were in the room?" asked Vandeleur, turning to Osborne.

"Yes," he replied. "She was conscious to the last moment, and died suddenly."

"Did she tell you anything?"

"No, except to assure me that she had not eaten any food that day until she had come down to breakfast. After the death occurred I sent immediately to report the case, locked the door of the room where the poor girl's body is, and saw also that nobody touched anything on this table."

Vandeleur rang the bell and a servant appeared. He gave quick orders. The entire remains of the meal were collected and taken charge of, and then he and the coroner's officer went upstairs.

When we were alone Selby sank into a chair. His face was quite drawn and haggard.

"It is the horrible suddenness of the thing which is so appalling," he cried. "As to

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Beatrice, I don't believe she will ever be the same again. She was deeply attached to Edith. Edith was nearly ten years her senior, and always acted the part of mother to her. This is a sad beginning to our life. I can scarcely think collectedly."

the aspects of the case, her undoubted sanity and her affection for her sister, we may almost exclude the idea of suicide. We must, therefore, call it murder. This harmless, innocent lady is struck down by the hand of an assassin, and with such devilish



"SHE JUMPED UP FROM THE TABLE AND UTTERED A SHARP CRY."

I remained with him a little longer, and then, as Vandeleur did not return, went back to my own house. There I could settle to nothing, and when Vandeleur rang me up on the telephone about six o'clock I hurried off to his rooms. As soon as I arrived I saw that Selby was with him, and the expression on both their faces told me the truth.

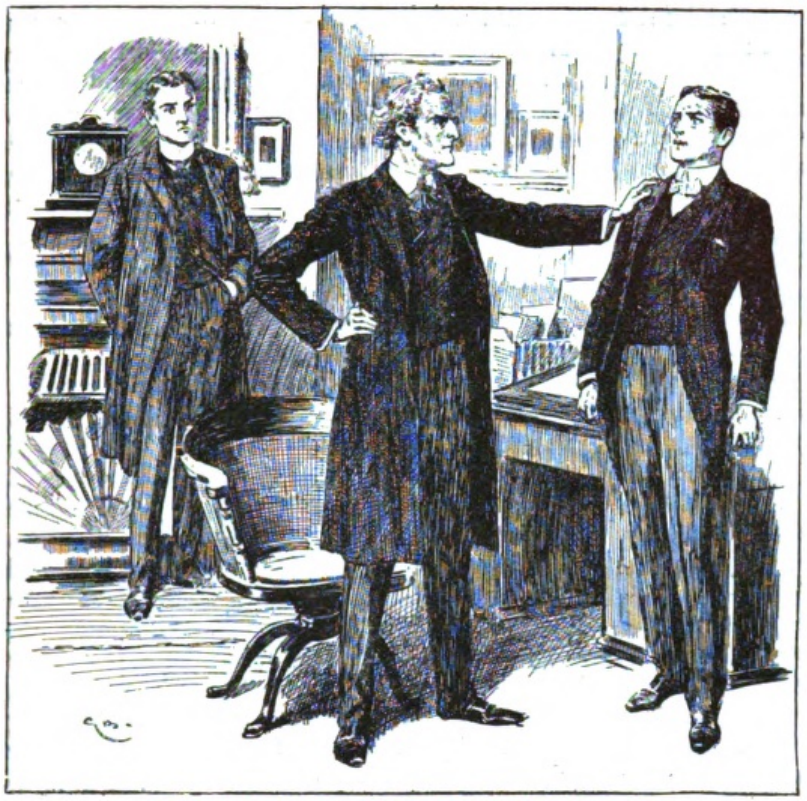
"This is a bad business," said Vandeleur. "Miss Dallas has died from swallowing poison. An exhaustive analysis and examination have been made, and a powerful poison, unknown to European toxicologists, has been found. This is strange enough, but how it has been administered is a puzzle. I confess, at the present moment, we are all nonplussed. It certainly was not in the remains of the breakfast, and we have her dying evidence that she took nothing else. Now, a poison with such appalling potency would take effect quickly. It is evident that she was quite well when she came to breakfast, and that the poison began to work towards the close of the meal. But how did she get it? This question, however, I shall deal with later on. The more immediate point is this. The situation is a serious one in view of the monetary issues and the value of the lady's life. From cunning that no trace or clue is left behind For such an act there must have been some very powerful motive, and the person who designed and executed it must be a criminal of the highest order of scientific ability. Mr. Selby has been telling me the exact financial position of the poor lady, and also of his own young wife. The absolute disappearance of the step-brother, in view of his previous character, is in the highest degree strange. Knowing, as we do, that between him and two million sterling there stood two lives—*one is taken!*"

A deadly sensation of cold seized me as Vandeleur uttered these last words. I glanced at Selby. His face was colourless and the pupils of his eyes were contracted, as though he saw something which terrified him.

"What has happened once may happen again," continued Vandeleur. "We are in the presence of a great mystery, and I counsel you, Mr. Selby, to guard your wife with the utmost care."

These words, falling from a man of Vandeleur's position and authority on such matters, were sufficiently shocking for me to hear, but for Selby to be given such a solemn warning about his young and beautiful and newly-married wife, who was all the world to

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"I COUNSEL YOU, MR. SELBY, TO GUARD YOUR WIFE."

him, was terrible indeed. He leant his head on his hands.

"Mercy on us!" he muttered. "Is this a civilized country when death can walk abroad like this, invisible, not to be avoided? Tell me, Mr. Vandeleur, what I must do."

"You must be guided by me," said Vandeleur, "and, believe me, there is no witchcraft in the world. I shall place a detective in your household immediately. Don't be alarmed; he will come to you in plain clothes and will simply act as a servant. Nevertheless, nothing can be done to your wife without his knowledge. As to you, Druce," he continued, turning to me, "the police are doing all they can to find this man Silva, and I ask you to help them with your big agency, and to begin at once. Leave your friend to me. Wire instantly if you hear news."

"You may rely on me," I said, and a moment later I had left the room.

As I walked rapidly down the street the thought of Madame Sara, her shop and its mysterious background, its surgical instruments, its operating-table, its induction coils, came back to me. And yet what could Madame Sara have to do with the present strange, inexplicable mystery?

The thought had scarcely crossed my mind before I heard a clatter alongside the kerb, and turning round I saw a smart open carriage, drawn by a pair of horses, standing there. I also heard my own name. I turned. Bending out of the carriage was Madame Sara.

"I saw you going by, Mr. Druce. I have only just heard the news about poor Edith Dallas. I am terribly shocked and upset. I have been to the house, but they would not admit me. Have you heard what was the cause of her death?"

Madame's blue eyes filled with tears as she spoke.

"I am not at liberty to disclose what I have heard, Madame," I answered, "since I am officially connected with the affair."

Her eyes narrowed. The brimming tears dried as though by magic. Her glance became scornful.

"Thank you," she answered; "your reply tells me that she did not die naturally. How very appalling! But I must not keep you. Can I drive you anywhere?"

"No, thank you."

"Good-bye, then."

She made a sign to the coachman, and as the carriage rolled away turned to look back at me. Her face wore the defiant expression I had seen there more than once. Could she be connected with the affair? The thought came upon me with a violence that seemed almost conviction. Yet I had no reason for it—none.

To find Henry Joachim Silva was now my principal thought. Advertisements were widely circulated. My staff had instructions to make every possible inquiry, with large money rewards as incitements. The collateral branches of other agencies throughout Brazil were communicated with by cable, and all the Scotland Yard channels were used. Still there was no result. The newspapers took up the case; there were paragraphs in most of them with regard to the missing step-brother and the mysterious death of Edith Dallas. Then someone got hold of the story of the will, and this was

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retailed with many additions for the benefit of the public. At the inquest the jury returned the following verdict: –

"*We find that Miss Edith Dallas died from taking poison of unknown name, but by whom or how administered there is no evidence to say.*"

This unsatisfactory state of things was destined to change quite suddenly. On the 6th of August, as I was seated in my office, a note was brought me by a private messenger. It ran as follows:—

"Norfolk Hotel, Strand.

"DEAR SIR,—I have just arrived in London from Brazil, and have seen your advertisements. I was about to insert one myself in order to find the whereabouts of my sisters. I am a great invalid and unable to leave my room. Can you come to see me at the earliest possible moment?—Yours,

"HENRY JOACHIM SILVA."

In uncontrollable excitement I hastily dispatched two telegrams, one to Selby and the other to Vandeleur, begging of them to be with me, without fail, as soon as possible. So the man had never been in England at all. The situation was more bewildering than ever. One thing, at least, was probable—Edith Dallas's death was not due to her step-brother. Soon after half-past six Selby arrived, and Vandeleur walked in ten minutes later. I told them what had occurred and showed them the letter. In half an hour's time we reached the hotel, and on stating who I was we were shown into a room on the first floor by Silva's private servant. Resting in an arm-chair, as we entered, sat a man; his face was terribly thin. The eyes and cheeks were so sunken that the face had almost the appearance of a skull. He made no effort to rise when we entered, and glanced from one of us to the other with the utmost astonishment. I at once introduced myself and explained who we were. He then waved his hand for his man to retire.

"You have heard the news, of course, Mr. Silva?" I said.

"News! What?" He glanced up to me and seemed to read something in my face. He started back in his chair.

"Good heavens!" he replied. "Do you allude to my sisters? Tell me, quickly, are they alive?"

"Your elder sister died on the 29th of July, and there is every reason to believe that her death was caused by foul play."

As I uttered these words the change that passed over his face was fearful to witness. He did not speak, but remained motionless. His claw-like hands clutched the arms of the chair, his eyes were fixed and staring, as though they would start from their hollow sockets, the colour of his skin was like clay. I heard Selby breathe quickly behind me, and Vandeleur stepped towards the man and laid his hand on his shoulder.

"Tell us what you know of this matter," he said, sharply.

Recovering himself with an effort, the invalid began in a tremulous voice:—

"Listen closely, for you must act quickly. I am indirectly responsible for this fearful thing. My life has been a wild and wasted one, and now I am dying. The doctors tell me I cannot live a month, for I have a large aneurism of the heart. Eighteen months ago I was in Rio. I was living fast and gambled heavily. Among my fellow-gamblers was a man much older than myself. His name was José Aranjo. He was, if anything, a greater gambler than I. One night we played alone. The stakes ran high until they reached a big figure. By daylight I had lost to him nearly £200,000. Though I am a rich man in point of income under my uncle's will, I could not pay a twentieth part of that sum. This man knew my financial position, and, in addition to a sum of £5,000 paid down, I gave him a document. I must have been mad to do so. The document was this—it was duly witnessed and attested by a lawyer—that, in the event of my surviving my two sisters and thus inheriting the whole of my uncle's vast wealth, half a million should go to José Aranjo. I felt I was breaking up at the time, and the chances of my inheriting the money were small. Immediately after the completion of the document this man left Rio, and I then heard a great deal about him that I had not previously known. He was a man of the queerest antecedents, partly Indian, partly Italian. He had spent many years of his life amongst the Indians. I heard also that he was as cruel as he was clever, and possessed some wonderful secrets of poisoning unknown to the West. I thought a great deal about this, for I knew that by signing that document I had placed the lives of my two sisters between him and a fortune. I came to Para six weeks ago, only to learn that one of my sisters was married and that both had gone to England. Ill as I was, I determined to follow them in order to warn them. I also wanted to arrange matters with you, Mr. Selby."

"One moment, sir," I broke in, suddenly.

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"Do you happen to be aware if this man, José Aranjo, knew a woman calling herself Madame Sara?"

"Knew her?" cried Silva. "Very well indeed, and so, for that matter, did I. Aranjo and Madame Sara were the best friends, and constantly met. She called herself a professional beautifier—was very handsome, and had secrets for the pursuing of her trade unknown even to Aranjo."

"Good heavens!" I cried, "and the woman is now in London. She returned here with Mrs. Selby and Miss Dallas. Edith was very much influenced by her, and was constantly with her. There is no doubt in my mind that she is guilty. I have suspected her for some time, but I could not find a motive. Now the motive appears. You surely can have her arrested?"

Vandeleur made no reply. He gave me a strange look, then he turned to Selby.

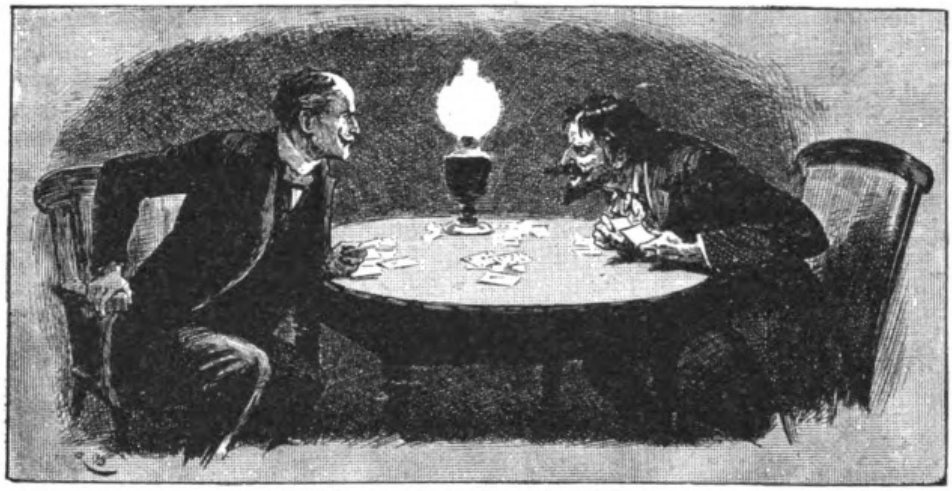
"Has your wife also consulted Madame Sara?" he asked, sharply.

"Yes, she went to her once about her teeth, but has not been to the shop since Edith's death. I begged of her not to see the woman, and she promised me faithfully she would not do so."

"Has she any medicines or lotions given to her by Madame Sara—does she follow any line of treatment advised by her?"

"No, I am certain on that point."

"Very well, I will see your wife to-night in order to ask her some questions. You must both leave town at once. Go to your country house and settle there. I am quite serious when I say that Mrs. Selby is in the utmost possible danger until after the death of her brother. We must leave you now, Mr. Silva. All business affairs must wait for the present. It is absolutely necessary that Mrs. Selby should leave London at once. Good-night, sir. I shall give myself the pleasure of calling on you to-morrow morning."



"I HAD LOST TO HIM NEARLY £200,000!"

We took leave of the sick man. As soon as we got into the street Vandeleur stopped.

"I must leave it to you, Selby," he said, "to judge how much of this matter you will tell to your wife. Were I you I would explain everything. The time for immediate action has arrived, and she is a brave and sensible woman. From this moment you must watch all the foods and liquids that she takes. She must never be out of your sight or out of the sight of some other trustworthy companion."

"I shall, of course, watch my wife myself," said Selby. "But the thing is enough to drive one mad."

"I will go with you to the country, Selby," I said, suddenly.

"Ah!" cried Vandeleur, "that is the best thing possible, and what I wanted to propose. Go, all of you, by an early train to-morrow."

"Then I will be off home at once, to make arrangements," I said. "I will meet you, Selby, at Waterloo for the first train to Cronsmoor to-morrow."

As I was turning away Vandeleur caught my arm.

"I am glad you are going with them," he said. "I shall write to you to-night *re* instructions. Never be without a loaded revolver. Good-night."

By 6.15 the next morning Selby, his wife, and I were in a reserved, locked, first-class compartment, speeding rapidly west. The servants and Mrs. Selby's own special maid were in a separate carriage. Selby's face

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showed signs of a sleepless night, and presented a striking contrast to the fair, fresh face of the girl round whom this strange battle raged. Her husband had told her everything, and, though still suffering terribly from the shock and grief of her sister's death, her face was calm and full of repose.

A carriage was waiting for us at Cronsmoor, and by half-past nine we arrived at the old home of the Selbys, nestling amid its oaks and elms. Everything was done to make the home-coming of the bride as cheerful as circumstances would permit, but a gloom, impossible to lift, overshadowed Selby himself. He could scarcely rouse himself to take the slightest interest in anything.

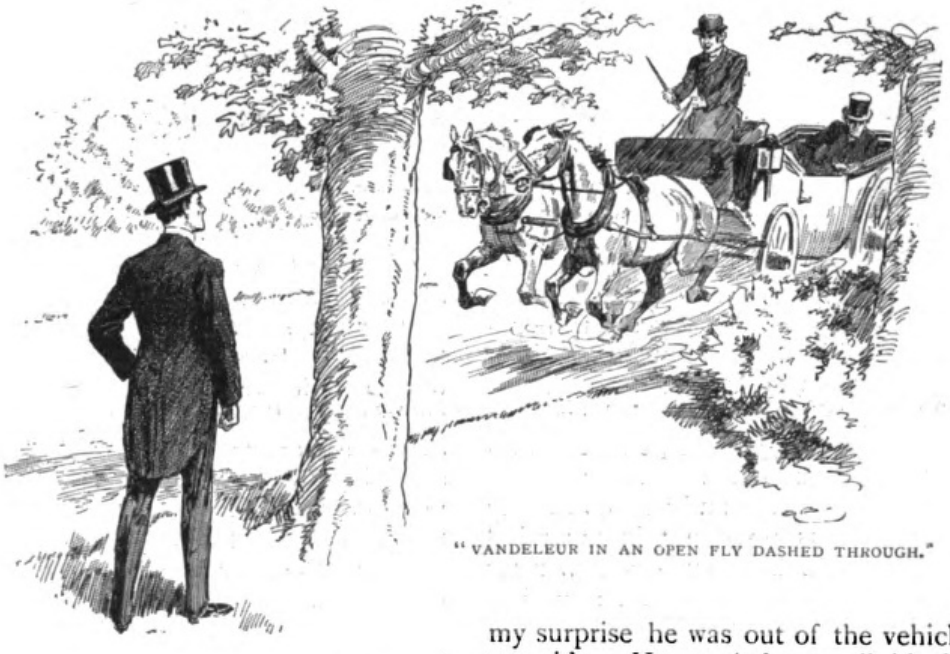
The following morning I received a letter from Vandeleur. It was very short, and once more impressed on me the necessity of caution. He said that two eminent physicians had examined Silva, and the verdict was that he could not live a month. Until his death precautions must be strictly observed.

The day was cloudless, and after breakfast I was just starting out for a stroll when the butler brought me a telegram. I tore it open; it was from Vandeleur.

"Prohibit all food until I arrive. Am coming down," were the words. I hurried into the study and gave it to Selby. He read it and looked up at me.

"Find out the first train and go and meet him, old chap," he said. "Let us hope that this means an end of the hideous affair."

I went into the hall and looked up the trains. The next arrived at Cronsmoor at 10.45. I then strolled round to the stables and ordered a carriage, after which I walked up and down on the drive. There was no doubt that something strange had happened. Vandeleur coming down so suddenly must mean a final clearing up of the mystery. I had just turned round at the lodge gates to wait for the carriage when the sound of wheels and of horses galloping struck on my ears. The gates were swung open, and Vandeleur in an open fly dashed through them. Before I could recover from my surprise he was out of the vehicle and at my side. He carried a small black bag in his hand.



"VANDELEUR IN AN OPEN FLY DASHED THROUGH."

"I came down by special train," he said, speaking quickly. "There is not a moment to lose. Come at once. Is Mrs. Selby all right?"

"What do you mean?" I replied. "Of course she is. Do you suppose that she is in danger?"

"Deadly," was his answer. "Come."

We dashed up to the house together. Selby, who had heard our steps, came to meet us.

"Mr. Vandeleur!" he cried. "What is it? How did you come?"

"By special train, Mr. Selby. And I want to see your wife at once. It will be necessary to perform a very trifling operation."

"Operation!" he exclaimed.

"Yes; at once."

We made our way through the hall and into the morning-room, where Mrs. Selby

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was busily engaged reading and answering letters. She started up when she saw Vandeleur and uttered an exclamation of surprise.

"What has happened?" she asked.

Vandeleur went up to her and took her hand.

"Do not be alarmed," he said, "for I have come to put all your fears to rest. Now, please, listen to me. When you visited Madame Sara with your sister, did you go for medical advice?"

The colour rushed into her face.

"One of my teeth ached," she answered. "I went to her about that. She is, as I suppose you know, a most wonderful dentist. She examined the tooth, found that it required stopping, and got an assistant, a Brazilian, I think, to do it."

"And your tooth has been comfortable ever since?"

"Yes, quite. She had one of Edith's stopped at the same time."

"Will you kindly sit down and show me which was the tooth into which the stopping was put?"

She did so.

"This was the one," she said, pointing with her finger to one in the lower jaw. "What do you mean? Is there anything wrong?"

Vandeleur examined the tooth long and carefully. There was a sudden rapid movement of his hand, and a sharp cry from Mrs. Selby. With the deftness of long practice, and a powerful wrist, he had extracted the tooth with one wrench. The suddenness of the whole thing, startling as it was, was not so strange as his next movement.

"Send Mrs. Selby's maid to her," he said, turning to her husband; "then come, both of you, into the next room."

The maid was summoned. Poor Mrs. Selby had sunk back in her chair, terrified and half fainting. A moment later Selby joined us in the dining-room.

"That's right," said Vandeleur; "close the door, will you?"

He opened his black bag and brought out several instruments. With one he removed the stopping from the tooth. It was quite soft and came away easily. Then from the bag he produced a small guinea-pig, which he requested me to hold. He pressed the sharp instrument into the tooth, and opening the mouth of the little animal placed the point on the tongue. The effect was instantaneous. The little head fell on to one of my hands—the guinea-pig was dead. Vandeleur was white as a sheet. He hurried up to Selby and wrung his hand.

"Thank Heaven!" he said, "I've been in time, but only just. Your wife is safe. This stopping would hardly have held another hour. I have been thinking all night over the mystery of your sister-in-law's death, and over every minute detail of evidence as to how the poison could have been administered. Suddenly the coincidence of both sisters having had their teeth stopped struck me as remarkable. Like a flash the solution came to me. The more I considered it the more I felt that I was right; but by what fiendish cunning such a scheme could have been conceived and executed is still beyond my power to explain. The poison is very like hyoscine, one of the worst toxic-alkaloids known, so violent in its deadly proportions that the amount that would go into a tooth would cause almost instant death. It has been kept in by a gutta-percha stopping, certain to come out within a month, probably earlier, and most probably during mastication of food. The person would die either immediately or after a very few minutes, and no one would connect a visit to the dentist with a death a month afterwards."

What followed can be told in a very few words. Madame Sara was arrested on suspicion. She appeared before the magistrate, looking innocent and beautiful, and managed during her evidence completely to baffle that acute individual. She denied nothing, but declared that the poison must have been put into the tooth by one of the two Brazilians whom she had lately engaged to help her with her dentistry. She had her suspicions with regard to these men soon afterwards, and had dismissed them. She believed that they were in the pay of José Aranjo, but she could not tell anything for certain. Thus Madame escaped conviction. I was certain that she was guilty, but there was not a shadow of real proof. A month later Silva died, and Selby is now a double millionaire.

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The Humour of Sport.

II.—GOLF.

By James Walter Smith.

MUCH of the humour of golf comes from the outside. The insider — he who plays—never makes fun of the Ancient and Royal Game. This is as it should be. There is no game which is, or deserves to be, taken more seriously. According to one cynic, it requires two years to learn the terms of the game, another two years to differentiate the clubs and to learn the use of each, and still another year to find out that no golfer is a hero to his caddie. By the time this five years' apprenticeship is served, continues our cynic, you are fit to begin to learn the game, have perhaps become a careless though hardened dispenser of strong language, and have learned to handle a cleek with some *aplomb* before the lady with whom you may be engaging in a hole-to-hole tournament.



"In my humble opinion a man looks at his very best in golfing kit."
DRAWN BY E. MITCHELL. REPRODUCED BY PERMISSION OF THE PROPRIETORS OF "GOLF ILLUSTRATED."

To the tyro at golf we fancy that the subject of dress presents many perplexities. He who would play golf, even though he be a hippopotamus, is subject to rigid rule; but the choice of cloth or style of knickerbockers is merely a question of checks and length. The blazing red golf jacket, which a few years ago made the links a seeming paradise for any neighbouring bull, has apparently gone out of fashion, and the golfer now clothes himself in quiet cloth of quiet pattern that does not wake his brother-players up at night. A golf suit covers a multitude of deficiencies in many a player, but we agree with the gentleman in our illustration when he says that a man looks his very best in it.



Natural Advantages.—The Adjutant: "I am almost sorry that knickerbockers are so fashionable."
The Hippo: "To tell the truth, so am I."
DRAWN BY A. Z. BAKER FOR "PUCK."

Once the question of dress is settled and the caddie-bag picked out, the actual difficulties of the game begin. Golf is like any other game that demands close study. Its nomenclature is puzzling, but he who takes earnestly to the game need worry but little over the

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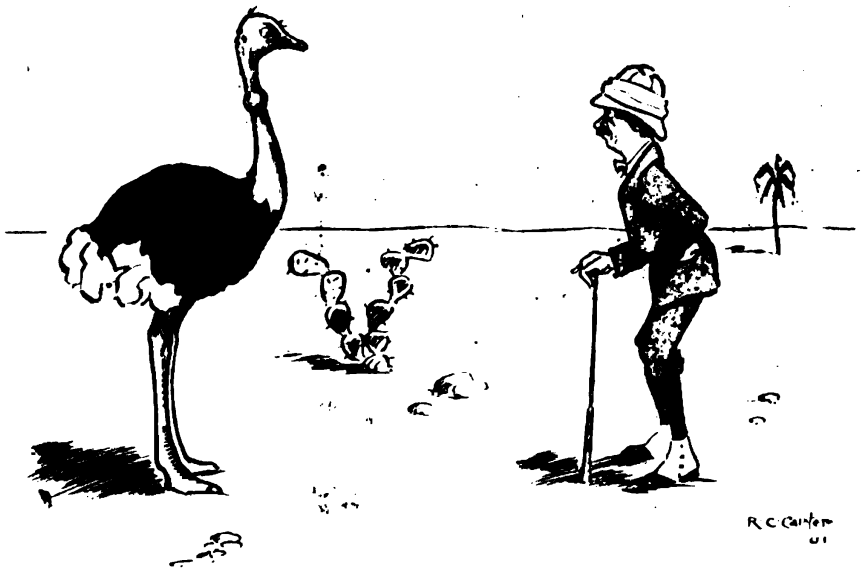


IT TAKES TIME.—Miss Weston: "And have you played much golf, Mr. Jones?"
Mr. Jones: "Well—er—no, I can't say I've played much, but I've walked round the links several times, and I'm beginning to understand the language."
DRAWN BY BERNARD WESTMACOTT FOR "THE KING."

sin of confusing a brassie with a mashie, either in the abstract or when they are in actual use. The young man who hadn't played much, but had walked over the links several times trying to understand the language, doubtless had much to learn. To him the lingo constituted a real puzzle, but the perplexities of the preliminary stage in golf are nothing compared with the puzzles that have to be solved at a later one. A veteran of many years' standing, for instance, might well stand aghast in front of an ostrich which had swallowed the ball. "I wonder what I do now?" says the player. The ostrich, knowing that he has hold of a good thing, says nothing to interfere with digestion, or to help the poor player out of his quandary.

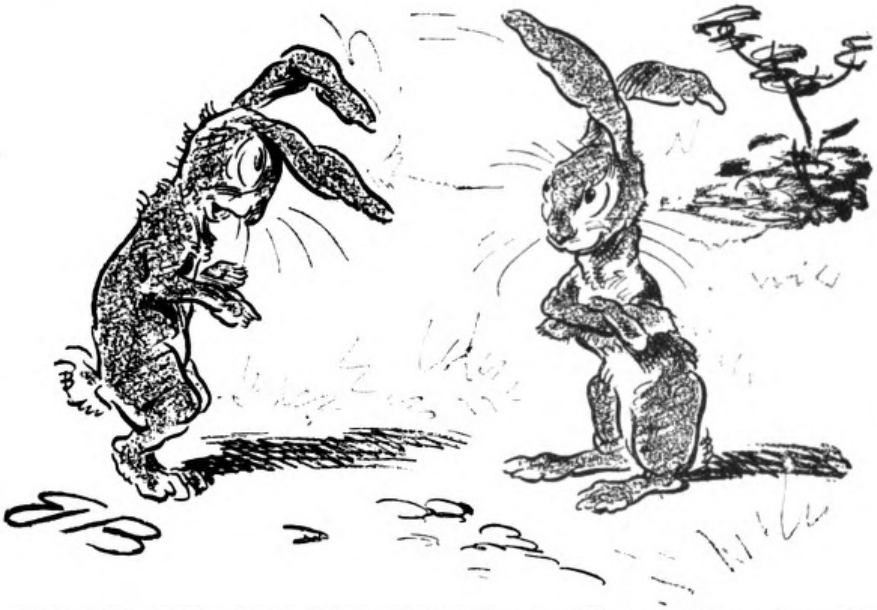
The attractiveness of the game and its accessories puts many perils in the path of the animal kingdom. Just as an ostrich might swallow a golf ball with gusto, or a goat eat up a pair of fancy-coloured golf breeches, so might a rabbit swallow a little round white object on the links, thinking it to be a mushroom. The humorist's treatment of a gastric catastrophe such as this may appear slightly far-fetched, but there is much wisdom in the remark of Mrs. Rabbit to her husband: "Well, you jack, if you're so near-sighted you can't tell a mushroom from a golf ball, you've got to suffer, that's all!" Mayhap the disappearance of golf balls is due to such causes as these, but we prefer to think that they disappear through human agency.

In the reports of the game we look in vain for some reference to that very important and ubiquitous personage whom the Frenchman on the next page has very naturally mixed up with the tee. Who else but the caddie could be meant? Were it not for that saucy, tar-fingered little gentleman, who,



GOLF IN THE DESERT.—Golfer (observing his ball in ostrich's neck): "I wonder what I do now?"
DRAWN BY R. C. CARTER FOR "THE KING."

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ACUTE MISTAKEN IDENTITY.—"Say, wife, I swallowed a little round white mushroom this morning, and it feels like lead in my stomach."
"Well, you jack, if you're so near-sighted you can't tell a mushroom from a golf-ball, you've got to suffer, that's all!" DRAWN BY A. Z. BAKER FOR "PUCK."

in addition to a genuine knowledge of the game, knows that old golf balls fetch 3s. 9d. the dozen, half the fun in the game would be gone. From the seventy-year-old caddies at St. Andrews down to the little "coons" who officiate on the American links, these picturesque figures form a great and ever-growing class. They give advice when it is asked—sometimes when it is not—and that advice is based upon the best of experience. Sometimes they are very much in the way, but, as in the case of the young lady with an uncongenial partner, one prefers to have the caddie in the way. They say exactly what they think, and think a deal more than they utter. "I'm tired of you laughing at my game," once remarked a wrathful golfer. "If I hear any more impudence from you I'll hit you over the head." "All right," replied the caddie; "but I'll bet you don't know what would be the right club to do it with." Another story comes from St. Andrews. Says an eighteen man on his first round to his caddie, "There's an infernal lot of bunkers and hazards here!" "Oh, aye," was the reply, "but ye've been in them a' but twa." Is it any wonder that, at such a moment, the resisting power of man breaks its limit, and results in the torrent of blue abuse that has made the golfer's vocabulary famous? The stories told of caddies would fill a book. Golfers still delight to tell of the beginner who remarked to his faithful attendant that a drive and a putt would carry him to the next hole. The drive was made and the ball rolled a few yards into the distance, when the caddie drily remarked: "Noo for a —— o' a putt!" If the non-golfer finds no fun in this story he should buy a glossary of golf terms. Golfers also tell of the stranger who, struck by the appearance of a player in front whom his caddie seemed to know, asked the name of this apparently distinguished person. "That's Lord X——," replied the caddie. Then, drawing attention to an imperfect pair of



QUITE EXCUSABLE.—Monsieur: "Vat is it—zee leetle—zee leetle mont for zee ball?"
Pitying Amazon: "The tee."
Monsieur: "Zee thé? Mon Dieu! Zen you carry zee thé in zee caddie, n'est-ce pas?"
DRAWN BY HOWARD SOMERVILLE FOR THE "SKETCH."

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OUR CADDIES.—"Now, where HAS that little boy got to?"
DRAWN BY R. C. CARTER. REPRODUCED BY PERMISSION OF THE PROPRIETORS OF "GOLF ILLUSTRATED."

nether garments he himself wore, added: "Him an' me's great frcens—they's his breeks."

The friendships thus struck up between golfer and caddie are not unusual. In fact, there are caddies and caddies, and with some of them one can advantageously make friends. A good caddie is like a good gillie, watchful of his employer's interest and a partner in his success. If his advice be sought, he can often tell the player not only the proper direction to play, but also the proper club to use and the line of the putt. Moreover, unless very wicked, he is usually in evidence and attentive to his duties. An abnormally stout party, as our picture proves, sometimes has a little difficulty in finding his boy, but these disappearances are happily of rare occurrence. He was much in evidence when the Major played after a heavy lunch, but showed a lack of breeding by his laughter. The first requirement of a caddie is that he keep a straight face, no matter what he sees.

We can conceive, however, that there are moments in the game when the presence of a caddie complicates affairs, especially *les affaires du cœur*. We have already had one example of this. Another good one runs as follows: "Here's a shilling, caddie," says the young man to the boy, as he starts off with his arm around a fair golfer's waist; "you want to forget this." "Don't worry, sir," replies the caddie, "I've forgot more about that kind of business than you ever knew." With such opportunities at hand it is not surprising that caddies turn many a good penny on the links, for the feminine influence on the game has become very potent in the last decade. A foursome between the two sexes is therefore a sure source of income to the lucky young gentlemen who carry the clubs. They, at least, are satisfied with their calling. "Here's sixpence, my poor lad," once said a kind golfer. "Instead of living this way, why don't you learn a trade?" "I wad, sir, if I kent of a better yin than this," was the quick reply.

Another trying thing about golf is the realization of opportunities



ABSENT-MINDED.—How the Major played golf after a heavy luncheon.
DRAWN BY R. J. RICHARDSON FOR "THE KING."

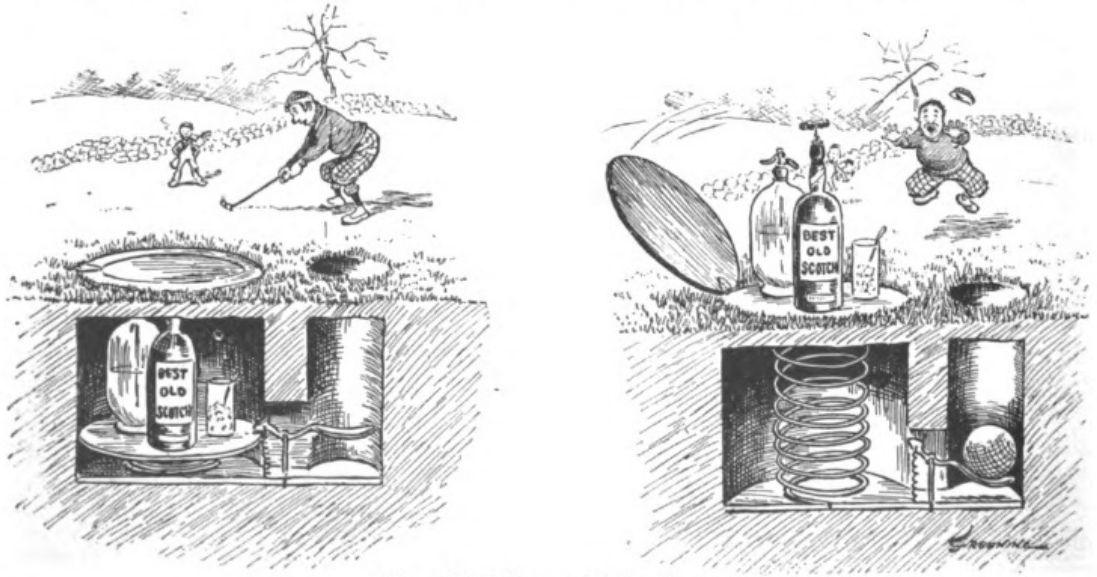
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lost, these lost opportunities being the result of ignorance, with the realization coming after defeat. The youth shown in one of our illustrations, sitting despondent beside a fair lady, does not owe his condition to a feminine negative, but to a realization that he might have won his match had he used a lofting-iron instead of a cleek. Such moments as these come into the life of every man.



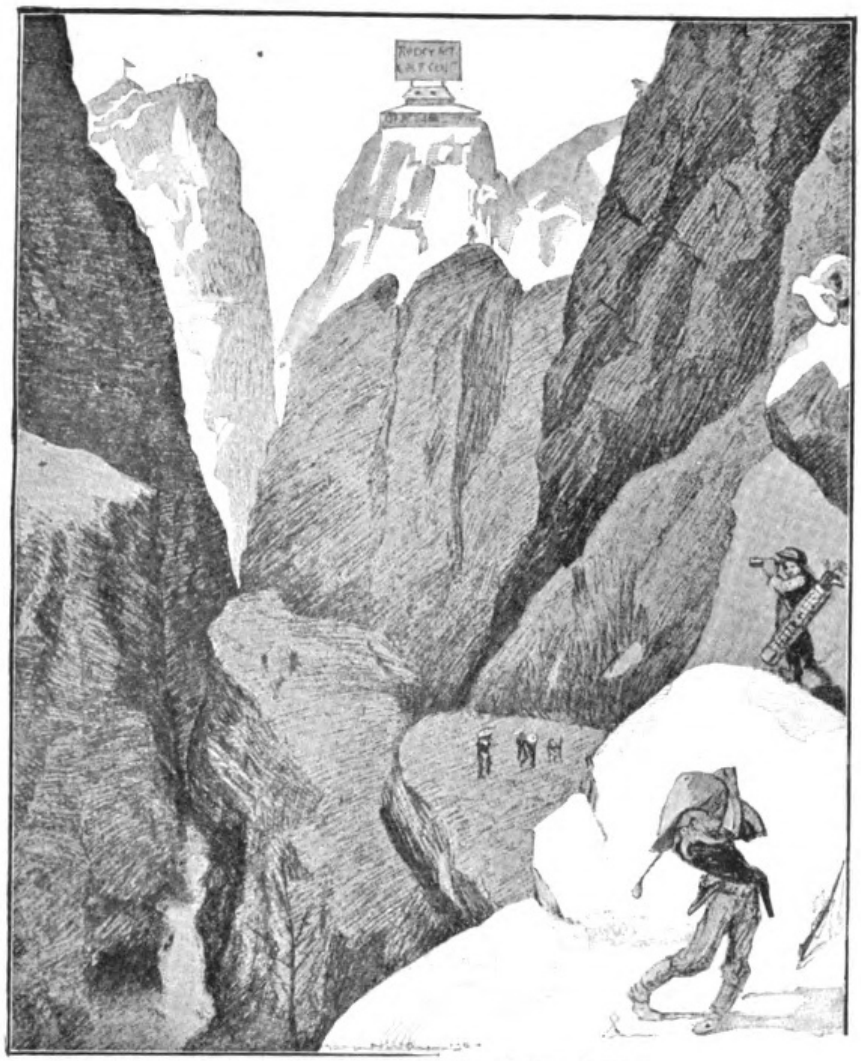
SERIOUS.—No, this is not a refusal. He realizes now that he should have used the lofting-iron instead of the cleek.
DRAWN BY BAYARD JONES FOR "LIFE."

Let us not, however, forget that the game has its beauties. A thirty-six-hole match was recently played in Scotland, and was reported as follows: "At the first hole A. had the honour, and from a bad lie his second over-ran the green. B., on the green with his second, took 2 more to get down, but A. missed his putt, and this cost him a hole: 4—5. A. overdrove the green, and, his approach falling short, B., who lay dead with his second, holed out in 3 to the champion's 4." Another report tells how one of the players "took the game in hand and was 4 up at the turn. Both were in difficulties at the tenth, which went to A. in 5 to 6. Halving the eleventh in 5, a lovely 3 gave A. the twelfth, his opponent taking 5. B. was now only 2 up, but the 'Spectacles' bunker trapped the younger player, who lifted, and B. secured the thirteenth in 4. With a stroke at the fourteenth the same player got dormy, and winning the fifteenth secured the trophy." We quote these reports merely to show to the outsider who understands not, yet looketh on, that the method



HOLE YOUR BALL AND GET ONE.
Judge's patent quick thirst-quencher will save walking back to the club-house and encourage good playing. Send for Catalogue.
DRAWN BY H. C. GREENING FOR "JUDGE."

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GOLF IN THE WILD WEST.—Natural hazards.
DRAWN BY W. H. WALKER FOR "LIFE."

of scoring is one of the beautiful things about golf. It is sad to think that the quick thirst-quencher, patented by an American paper, has not yet been adopted on English links for the benefit of players who get "dormy" or upset so unmercifully the theory of fractions. Were the invention better known there would be no short matches. Everyone would be playing in thirty-six-hole contests.

What the future may bring forth is open to conjecture, and one artist, in picturing golf as played in the Wild West, has outlined his conception of golf as it may be played in days to come, with the majestic mountains as the natural hazards of pigmy man. Let us not indulge too long, however, in such fancies. Let us be content with the quiet enjoyment of the game, the ruddy complexion that bespeaks the presence of health, and the love of Nature aroused by the nearness of wood or sea. To follow a little ball across a field may seem ridiculous to other people. To the earnest golfer it is more than a mere chase for that which is sometimes lost. It means exercise, a clear brain, and a longer life, and even in its most perilous moments it is a good game for two.

We are indebted to the proprietors of *Golf Illustrated* and the *Sketch* for the use of drawings from their respective journals, and to Messrs. James Henderson, of Red Lion Court, E.C., for permission to reproduce the *Puck*, *Judge*, and *Life* drawings which we have selected from their publication, "Pictorial Comedy."



A GOOD GAME FOR TWO. DRAWN BY C. D. GIBSON FOR "LIFE."

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A THIEF IN THE NIGHT.

By Florence Warden.

Author of "A Patched-up Affair," "The House on the Marsh," "The Inn by the Shore," "The Master Key," etc., etc.

IF either of the three partners in the celebrated firm of goldsmiths, silversmiths, and jewellers, Messrs. Johnstone, Blake, and Barlow, had heard himself spoken of as a tradesman, he would no doubt have been highly offended by the appellation. Their house at Manningpool was probably the most important of its kind in the provinces; and there was certainly no firm in London itself which held its head higher or looked down upon the rest of the trade from more lofty an eminence.

Only two of the original partners were now left, and both were very old men. Indeed, Mr. Johnstone's age was not exactly known, and was popularly computed to be anything between ninety and a hundred. The old gentleman lived in a princely mansion a few miles out of Manningpool, and as he was very infirm he seldom left his own grounds. But his intellect was as keen as ever, and he still took an active interest in the business and received weekly reports in person from the manager of the establishment.

Mr. Barlow, the second of the original members of the firm, was, perhaps, not quite so old as Mr. Johnstone, but as he was a martyr to gout he never appeared at Manningpool, and took less part in the conduct of affairs than the senior partner.

The third member of the firm was Mr. Blake, who was a son of the original Blake. He was a comparative baby of thirty-five or so, and since he was a shrewd and enterprising man, who threw himself as heartily into business as he did in his leisure hours into sport, he was really, though the two old gentlemen would not have admitted it, of much more account than they in the management of the concern. He was, moreover, a man of personal dignity and charm, and the latter quality, being conspicuously absent from both his colleagues, was an asset not without its value.

If only he could have had his own way, Mr. Blake would have instituted sweeping reforms in the slightly musty old place of business, which must on no account be called a shop.

It was an establishment (that was the proper word) with an appearance of decorous gloom which would have frightened away any frivolous person who contemplated such a trifling purchase as a five-pound watch or a brooch set in anything less than diamonds. Brown wire blinds, on which the name of the firm could just be distinguished in gilt letters respectably rusty with age, shrouded the firm's treasures from the vulgar gaze; while the heavy marble pillars which supported the roof of the hall, and the solemn dignity of the hoary-headed gentleman who received customers — no, no, "clients" — in the entrance, at once assured visitors at the first glance that they would be served only with goods of the highest possible quality—at the highest possible price.

In vain Mr. Blake pleaded for the abolition of the wire blinds, for the display in the windows of a couple of magnificent challenge cups, or of a glorious tiara and a handful of pearls worth a prince's ransom. Both Mr. Johnstone and Mr. Barlow repelled the notion as they would have done an attack on their religion.

So Mr. Blake was forced to content himself with the superannuation of the antiquated gentleman who held the responsible position of manager, and persuaded his partners to replace him by his son, a young man of excellent character and considerable attainments, who had been at Oxford, where he had taken his degree of M.A., so that even Mr. Johnstone could scarcely look upon his introduction as a disgrace to the firm.

Young Merryon Dales, indeed, was a little sore at having to settle down in life in his father's old situation. Though the work was not hard, it was dull; and though the post was likely to be a permanent one, the salary was not large. Both the elder partners had insisted that he should begin at a lower salary than his father had enjoyed, and not all Mr. Blake's remonstrances had succeeded in making them give way on this point.

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"Never mind," said Mr. Blake to young Dales, on making known this decision to him. "It's most unfair, but it sha'n't go on long. You know these old fossils treat me as if I were just out of the nursery; but when we've worked up the business a bit—as you and I shall do—I'll have my way and you shall get your rise at once."

Dales was grateful, and he at once set about proving that he was worthy of his employer's good opinion. In spite of the wire blinds the energy and ability of the young partner and the still younger manager began to have their effect; and business, which had begun to ebb from the old-fashioned house, flowed back to it in ever-increasing volume.

Mr. Blake used to laugh with young Dales at the surprise of the "fossils" at this state of affairs.

"You shall get your increase of salary on my wedding-day," said he.

"What! Are you going to be married, Mr. Blake?"

The junior partner laughed.

"Well, it might come to that," said he, "if old Barlow's pretty granddaughter would be kind to me."

"Then we may look upon the wedding as a foregone conclusion, for I can't imagine any woman being anything else where you are concerned," said Dales.

For he looked upon the broad-shouldered, fresh-coloured Bernard Blake, with his bright black eyes and easy, virile movements, as the ideal of a ladies' man. And most of the ladies thought so too.

"She's a sort of little princess, though," said Mr. Blake, "who would expect to keep up great state. Now, without wishing to stint myself, I think it safer to be content with small beginnings."

It was Dale's turn to laugh.

"If I may say so, your way of life is not exactly mean or miserable. There isn't a handsomer pair in Manningpool than the chestnuts you drive in your phaeton."

"Ah, there's my weakness. But if I have to support a wife's weaknesses as well, you know, I might have the fossils down upon me like a hundred of bricks before I'd been six months a husband."

The manager laughed as Mr. Blake drew on his driving-gloves and went off. Without being ostentatiously smart, the turn-out he drove was reckoned one of the most perfect in the neighbourhood, and he was as happy behind his chestnuts as he was laborious behind his desk.

Things were going on pleasantly and prosperously with the firm when it fell one morning to the manager's lot to make a very startling and unpleasant discovery.

There was extensive and well-secured cellarage under the business premises of the firm, and in the very heart of it was a strong-room, some 12ft. square and 10ft. high, where the most valuable property in jewels and money was stored safely every evening, only to be taken out, under the manager's own eye, on the following morning.



"DALES LOOKED AT THE WORDS WITH A SHOCK."

The offices of the firm were on the ground floor and the showrooms above. Merryon Dales's place was at his desk in his own office downstairs; but Mr. Blake, who had an office there also, used to superintend the whole business of the place, and, when an important customer came, he never left matters to the salesmen, but devoted himself personally to the satisfaction of the visitor's wants. In this way he was popularly said to have brought in many thousands of pounds to the firm by his energy and powers of persuasion and diplomacy.

On the morning in question one of the young salesmen came to Merryon Dales with a note from Mr. Blake. It was only two lines, scribbled hastily on the inside of an envelope and then fastened down to avoid inspection by the messenger. It contained these words:—

"Where is the necklace with the trefoil pendant? Can't find it."

Dales looked at the words with a shock. The necklace in question was one of the most valuable jewels in the stock, consisting as it did of a magnificent triple row of

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diamonds, with a pendant containing three very large emeralds set in smaller diamonds.

He went upstairs himself and saw Mr. Blake busy with a customer—a rich man, who had recently attained to a peerage—who was frequently at the place. Dales waited his opportunity and spoke to Mr. Blake :—

"The necklace was in the third case on——"

"Yes—yes, I know where it *was;* what I want to know is where it *is*," answered Mr. Blake. "It hasn't been here this morning. Was it taken out of the strong-room?"

Dales reflected a moment. It was his habit to check off the principal objects as they were put in and out of the strong-room from a rough list of his own making. But this morning he admitted to himself that he did this work somewhat perfunctorily, and as he tried to recall the incident he had to own frankly that he did not remember either checking the case containing the necklace that morning or seeing it taken out.

Feeling very uncomfortable, he confessed this to Mr. Blake, who frowned slightly, and asked him to bring up the young man who had taken the jewellery out, as soon as the customer had gone.

In a few minutes, therefore, these three, Dales, Mr. Blake, and the young assistant, were all shut up together in the partner's office, and then it was discovered that neither Walker, the assistant, nor Dales could remember to have seen the necklace that morning.

Both confessed that, although they always took note of the things they put into the safe at night, it had become a matter of habit to take them out mechanically in the morning. And the more they talked the matter over, the more sure did they both become that they had put the necklace in the strong-room the night before, but had not taken it out again in the morning.

A visit to the strong-room was the next proceeding, but without result. There was no appearance of anything having been touched, nor of any injury having been done to the lock.

All three men began to look grave and anxious, as every inquiry they made strengthened the impression upon their minds that the necklace was put safely into the strong-room and that nobody had seen it since.

Walker, the assistant, a very young man with a fair skin and hesitating, girlish manner, was overwhelmed with a sense of danger and disgrace. Dales, though he concealed it better, was in almost as great a state of misery as he. Mr. Blake, although he tried to take the matter lightly and to assure them that it was all right, that some explanation of the mystery would presently be forthcoming, was evidently not less disturbed than his subordinates; and Dales had a most uncomfortable feeling that he himself was considered by the junior partner to be in some way concerned with the jewel's disappearance.

"We must inform the police," said Mr. Blake, "without any delay; although we hope the matter may be cleared up this very day, we can't afford the risk that may be incurred by the loss of an hour. And you and I, Dales, had better go to Mr. Johnstone's place at once. We'll call at the police-station on our way out."

Without a moment's loss of time, therefore, these two got into a cab and drove, first to the police-station, where full particulars were given, together with the fact that there appeared to be no clue to the mystery, and then out to Mr. Johnstone's place beyond the suburbs.

Mr. Johnstone heard the tale in silence. Then he shrugged his shoulders.

"A first result of your new, up-to-date methods," said he. "Such a thing has never happened before in the whole course of the firm's existence. And I cannot believe it would have happened now if you had been content to keep on my old servants and assistants, instead of bringing into the business a lot of young folk, who care nothing for the honour and well-being of the old firm."

"You are unjust, Mr. Johnstone," cried Mr. Blake, with spirit. "And since you are speaking in the presence of one of the young folk, as you call them, one who has worked hard and intelligently in our service, I think you ought to be more careful of your words."

"Mr. Dales knows that I make no imputation upon him, I'm sure," said Mr. Johnstone, gruffly indeed, but not without dignity and courtesy. "The fact remains that this is the first time such a thing has happened. There are only two keys known to exist which will open the safe, I believe?"

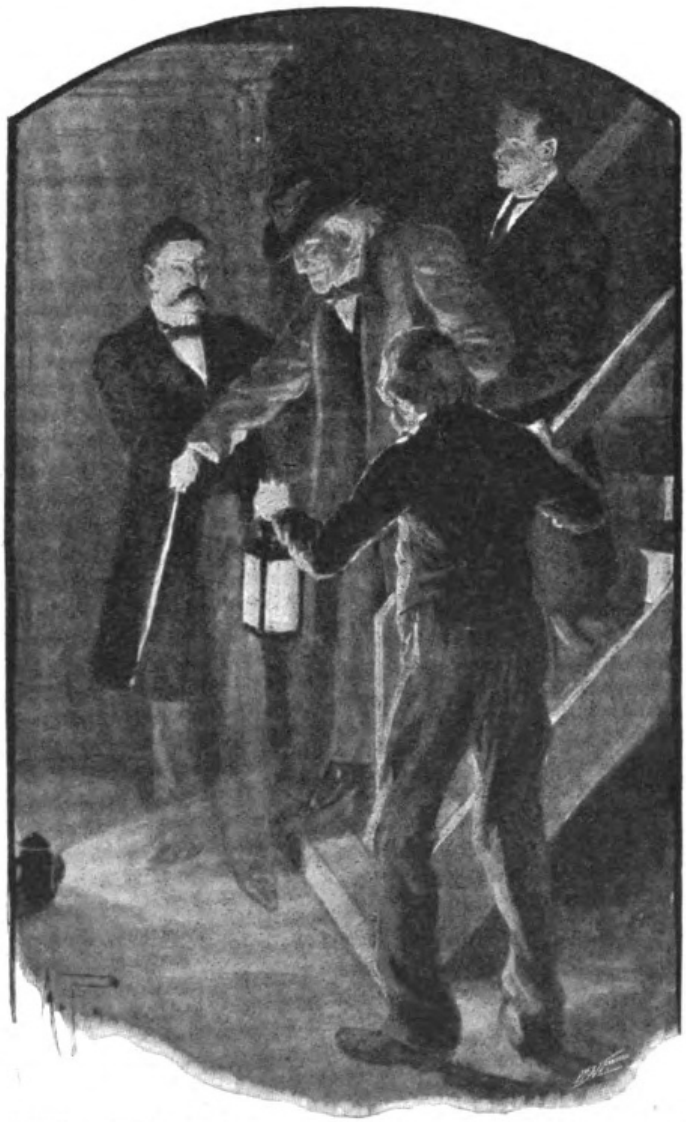
"Yes. I have one here, on my watch-chain," said Mr. Blake, showing a tiny gilded key which he wore inside his pocket. "And Mr. Dales has the counterpart, which, I believe, he wears on his."

Merryon produced his key, which he assured them never left his chain,

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"One or other of these keys must have been borrowed at some time and a copy made," said Mr. Johnstone, with decision, "if what you say about the lock being intact is correct. However, that matter I'll judge for myself. You've kept your cab? I'll go back with you."

Within an hour they were helping the infirm old gentleman down the steps into the cellar under the firm's place of business, and there, by the light of some lamps which were brought, he satisfied himself that no attempt had been made to tamper with the lock of the strong-room.



"THEY WERE HELPING THE INFIRM OLD GENTLEMAN DOWN THE STEPS INTO THE CELLAR."

Then the energetic old gentleman interviewed the police-inspector who called at Mr. Blake's instance, and a consultation ensued, in which, contrary to the opinion of Mr. Johnstone, who said that the suggestion was useless, it was decided that a watcher should be placed outside the strong-room door, in order to catch the thief if he should project further depredations.

This proposal was duly carried out, and a detective was stationed in the basement every night for some months. But neither that nor any of the other means tried by the firm and by the police resulted in the discovery of the slightest clue to the mystery.

Meanwhile Merryon Dales remained uneasy under the feeling that it was upon himself that Mr. Blake's suspicions were fixed, while the poor young assistant, Walker, would have withdrawn from the service of the firm if he had been allowed to do so, so strongly did he feel that he was the person whom Mr. Johnstone suspected of the theft.

It was quite six months after the loss of the necklace, and some weeks after the final withdrawal of the detective from the useless task of watching the door of the strong-room, when Mr. Johnstone gave to Merryon Dales, on one of his weekly visits to report affairs, a note for the remaining partner, with directions to him to deliver it with his own hands into Mr. Barlow's.

Merryon was rather surprised, and Mr. Johnstone, fixing his keen eyes upon his face, condescended to explain.

"It's an idea I've got about the loss of the necklace," said he. "I can't tell Mr. Blake; he's in London. Besides, he would think me an old fool if I did tell him. So it must be Mr. Barlow; but mind, you are not to let the letter get into the hands of anybody but himself—*anybody!* Give me your word as to that."

Much puzzled by the emphasis with which Mr. Johnstone spoke, Merryon, however, promised readily enough to obey his wishes; and that very evening he went to Mr. Barlow's house, not unwillingly, for he was anxious to catch a glimpse of that pretty grand-daughter of whom Mr. Blake had spoken, and who was indeed the beauty of the neighbourhood.

Not that Manningpool saw much of her, for she spent a great deal of her time in

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London, and the rest shut up in her grandfather's house and grounds, which were farther in the country than Mr. Johnstone's.

All that Merryon had seen of her was an occasional glimpse of a very beautiful, fair face, as she drove rapidly through the streets of Manningpool on her way to or from the railway station.

It was with some natural excitement, therefore, that he saw Miss Barlow herself coming towards the house when, having asked to see Mr. Barlow, he had been shown into the drawing-room, while the man went at once out to the lawn where the beautiful girl was strolling among her rose-trees. The moment the servant spoke to her Miss Barlow came towards the drawing-room window with rapid steps, and Merryon Dales had a perfect opportunity of seeing her. She was so beautiful, so much more beautiful than he had supposed, that the young man's heart leaped up within him at the sight. Perfectly dressed in a gown of embroidered lawn of creamy tint, with a big, shady hat trimmed with poppies, Nella Barlow looked and moved like a queen. She was rather tall and very slight, and her hair was just too dark to be called golden, while her fine black eyebrows gave depth to her big blue eyes and character to her lovely face. On her fingers were half-a-dozen most beautiful rings, and a string of magnificent pearls encircled her neck. It occurred to Merryon that, if he had seen these splendid jewels by daylight on the young relative of any other jeweller, he would have considered the display ostentatious; but he was already, at this first full sight of her, so much impressed that he could admit no wrong in what she did.

Miss Barlow came straight in and graciously gave him her hand. There was something queenly about the gesture, however, something which made him understand that she was accustomed to be worshipped. But, again, this fact seemed, in her, only graceful and natural and right.

"You come from the office?" said she; "and from Mr. Johnstone?"

"Yes. I have a letter from him for Mr. Barlow."

She held out her hand.

"I'll take it to him," said she.

In an instant Merryon was putting his hand into his pocket, so much dazzled that he had forgotten his employer's injunction. Before he had drawn out the letter, however, he remembered, grew very red, stammered, and finally said:—

"I beg your pardon; I have to deliver it to Mr. Barlow himself with my own hand."

She raised her eyebrows.

"But to give it to me is the same thing," said she. "My grandfather sees nobody, nobody at all, except Mr. Blake."

"Mr. Blake couldn't come; he's away in London on the firm's business."

"Then I'm afraid you must give the letter to me, however low an opinion you may have of my trustworthiness as a messenger."

Merryon bit his lip.

"Miss Barlow," he said, humbly, and with a voice as hoarse as a raven's, "you don't understand. It was Mr. Johnstone's injunction to me to give the letter into your grandfather's own hands——"

"And it's my injunction to you to give it into mine," said she, smiling, and once more holding out her hand with such a graceful mingling of command and entreaty that again Merryon felt it almost impossible to resist her.

He did resist, though, bending his head so that he might not be tempted to meet the beautiful blue eyes which, in their delicate feminine power, he would have found too irresistible.

"I must keep my word," said he, in a low voice.

"Don't you know that my grandfather is a martyr to gout and does not leave his room?" asked Miss Barlow, with less indignation with his obstinacy than he had expected.

"I know nothing, but—that I must fulfil my commission as it was given."

"So that if you cannot see my grandfather you will have to take the letter back?" said Miss Barlow, mockingly.

"Yes," said he, simply.

She turned away impatiently, and saying, "Have your way then," led the way out of the room and up the stairs to a door at which she knocked.

"It's I, grandpapa, and a gentleman from Mr. Johnstone, who has a letter for you."

A gruff and petulant voice said:—

"Oh, come in."

And there, seated in an arm-chair before the window, with one gouty foot on a stool in front of him, sat a very old gentleman wrapped in a cotton dressing-gown, frowning over his spectacles.

Merryon felt awkward, for Mr. Barlow looked annoyed at his entrance. He bowed and explained his mission.

"Just like old Johnstone and his fads," was Mr. Barlow's grumbling comment, as he almost snatched the letter out of his hand.

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He read it through with many grunts, while Merryon, whom he had not asked to be seated, stood awkwardly by, Miss Barlow having withdrawn from the room.

"Tomfoolery! All tomfoolery!" muttered the old gentleman as he finished the letter, tore it up into small pieces, and tossed the scraps into a waste-paper basket by his side. "However, he can do as he likes."

To Merryon, who knew nothing of the contents of the letter, these remarks were enigmatic indeed. Mr. Barlow pointed to a desk a little way off.

"If you'll open the right-hand drawer, young man," said he, "you will find a bunch of old keys. Take them to Mr. Johnstone, and tell him to find the right one if he can."

Following his instructions, Merryon soon took out the bunch of rusty keys, whereupon Mr. Barlow nodded and glanced towards the door.

"Good day," said he, simply.

And Merryon bowed again, wished him "good day," and went out, highly disgusted with his reception.

A charming voice, laughing softly, made him start.

"You found grandpapa rather cross, I'm afraid?"

"Not more cross than I'd been prepared to expect," said Merryon, rather stiffly.

Pretty Miss Barlow, who had come out of a room near at hand, looked rather crestfallen at this retort.

"I'm sorry if you thought me disagreeable, as you imply," said she, "but I'm in a difficult position. My grandfather indulges me in every possible way, but in return I have to transact all the business I can for him, so as to keep him free from all irritation and worry."

Her tone was so sweet, so humble, that Merryon was disarmed.

"I wouldn't have given you even the little trouble of taking me upstairs to him if I could have helped it," he said, gently.

"Oh, it was no trouble. I didn't mean that."

By this time she had led the way downstairs.

"You will have some tea," said she, leading the way back into the drawing-room, where the tea-tray had been brought in with two cups.

He could not resist; and when he started on his way back to Mr. Johnstone's, where he had promised to call that very evening, he was in a sort of trance from the effects of Miss Barlow's dazzling beauty.

When he reported the result of his visit to Mr. Johnstone, and handed him the keys, not forgetting to mention Mr. Barlow's exclamation as he read the letter, the senior partner laughed softly.

"Tomfoolery!" said he. "A nice man to talk about tomfoolery, an old idiot who wastes a fortune on the extravagant whims of a girl!"

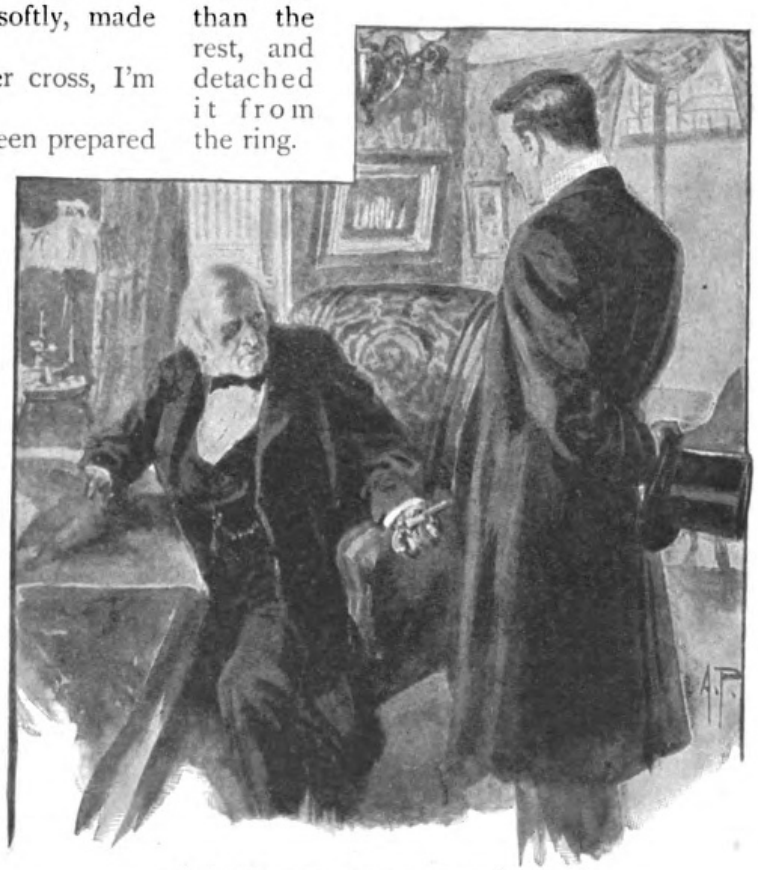
"But she's such a handsome, charming girl, sir!" expostulated Merryon.

The old man shrugged his shoulders.

"Tell me," said he, anxiously, "he didn't read the letter before her, did he?"

"No; he and I were alone in the room. Then he tore it up."

"Good, good. Now, you see this key?" Mr. Johnstone had picked out one, heavier, clumsier than the rest, and detached it from the ring.



"USE IT TO THREATEN, BUT DON'T FIRE."

"Yes, sir."

"Well, it belongs to a little wine-cellar down under our place of business; you've passed

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it many a time and never noticed it, I dare say. It's been closed up these ten years, ever since Mr. Barlow left off visiting the old place. It contains some wine laid down there by Mr. Barlow, and the entrance has been boarded up. I want you to remove the boards yourself, without saying anything to anybody whatever, and to keep watch there yourself—yourself, mind—for the space of one month from now."

"But, sir——" began Merryon, aghast.

"No 'buts,' please. If you won't do it, say so, and I'll do it myself. You young men have no enterprise, no——"

"Sir, don't be so hasty. If I could do any good I'd watch for a year. Do you suppose I'm not as anxious as anyone to find out the mystery about the robbery? But how can I hope to be more successful than a trained detective? And after all this time?"

"Do you suppose I don't know what I'm doing? Will you do as I wish you to do, or will you leave it to me?"

"I'll do it," said Merryon, quietly.

"Very well. Then I'll give you this revolver," and as he spoke Mr. Johnstone took out a neat little weapon from under a newspaper in front of him and placed it in the young manager's hand. "But mind, *don't fire.* Use it to threaten, but don't fire; and don't be surprised at what you see. That's all. And now I won't keep you any longer. Good evening."

"Good evening," said Merryon, like a man in a dream, as he went out.

Was the old gentleman getting a little confused in his brain at last? On the whole Merryon was inclined to think so. And certainly it was with no faintest idea that his watch would be more successful than that of the professional detective had been before him that he made his way down to the cellars of the firm's place of business that night, found the nailed-up door of the disused wine-cellar, pulled away the rotten boards which were fastened across it without much difficulty, inserted the old key into the lock, and walked into the little, musty-smelling hole which Mr. Johnstone had dignified by the name of cellar. He had strictly obeyed Mr. Johnstone's instructions not to let the least inkling of his intention leak out to anyone. Even to Mr. Blake, who had been late at the office that day—and who had wished to take the manager part of the way home in his dog-cart—he had said not a word of the singular commission with which he had been entrusted. This, however, was the result rather of accident than of design, for he knew well that he might have taken the junior partner into his confidence without impropriety. But Mr. Blake had been busy with the writing of a letter which, by the fact that he was enclosing a photograph of himself in it, Merryon gathered was not of a dull, business sort. And the manager had had no time to say much more than "good evening" to him.

It was a very easy matter for the manager to get down into the basement without anyone seeing him, for he made it a rule to slip out very quietly, sometimes by the front way and sometimes by the back, that the employés might not know exactly where to expect his departure, or at what time. He had supposed that the avoidance of the night watchman, who was always on the premises from nine o'clock at night till nine in the morning, would be a more difficult matter. But he had an opportunity of discovering that the manner in which that old and trusted retainer performed his duties was more perfunctory than the partners supposed.

John Hyde simply curled himself up for a sleep on a big leather settee in one of the show-rooms, and not even a sound of Merryon's efforts to tear down the boards from before the old cellar door disturbed his slumbers.

With little fear of having any meeting to look forward to, Merryon sat down on his improvised seat, crossed his legs, and leaned back against the wall of the little cellar. The door was ajar; no slightest sound or movement of anyone in the basement could escape him.

He had sat there in his uncomfortable post for a long time, and was getting as stiff as he was sleepy, when he was startled to hear footsteps coming quickly along the brick floor outside his hiding-place. Not the steps of old John Hyde, the watchman, that was certain. He had already made his one nightly descent into the basement, proclaiming his approach by stertorous breathing and by the creaking of his boots. No, this was a light footstep, that could only be heard by the closest listening. Merryon sat up, wondering.

The next minute he had stood up, transfixed with horror. For, in the long, dark passage outside, that lay between his hiding-place and the door of the strong-room, Merryon discerned, by the faint rays of early morning light that came through the ventilator in the wall, the figure of a woman.

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What woman it was he well knew, little as he could see of her. Dressed in dark clothes and muffled up with a veil as she was, Merryon recognised the graceful, queenly movements of Miss Barlow. She crept forward in a hurried manner, and was close to the strong-room door, when a movement on the part of Merryon, who was scarcely master of himself under the influence of the surprise and horror he felt, startled her and caused her to draw back hastily, and to retreat into the blackness of the open space to the left, where she at once became lost to view.

Merryon was sick and cold with amazement, with perplexity. It was not possible to believe that Miss Barlow was a thief, and yet if she had been, like himself, on the watch, she would surely not have fled away like a hare at the first sound she heard.



"THE NEXT MOMENT HE STOOD UP TRANSFIXED WITH HORROR."

Certain as he felt that she was as innocent of the theft as himself, Merryon felt shy and uncomfortable when, on the following day, he presented himself at Mr. Johnstone's, as he had arranged to do if he should see or hear anything in the course of his midnight watches.

"Well," said Mr. Johnstone to him, in triumph, the moment he caught sight of the young manager's face. "You've seen something. I can tell that by your looks."

Merryon began to stammer.

"No, indeed, sir, you're mistaken. That is to say, I have seen—well, I fancy I've seen someone down there; but it was another spy, I'm sure, and not a thief."

Mr. Johnstone smiled grimly.

"Who was it?" he said.

"I—I'd rather not say, sir."

"You may as well," said the old gentleman, drily. "Since you are sure it was not the thief, where's the harm?"

Merryon was silent.

"Didn't I tell you," said Mr. Johnstone, solemnly, after a short silence, "that it would surprise you to find out who the person was? I tell you the person you saw *was* the thief, and one of the most artful, cunning, and unprincipled thieves in England, too."

"I'll never believe it, sir," said Merryon, boldly.

The old man looked at him keenly.

"You'll have to believe it presently," said he.

Merryon was aghast.

"But—but—if it should be so—which I'll never believe," said he, at last, "you wouldn't—couldn't prosecute! Think of the scandal, of the pain you would bring to your partners—the slur upon the firm."

"We must chance that—risk that," said Mr. Johnstone, in his hardest, driest tone. "I've never been a party to the concealment of a felony, and I never will be."

Merryon went towards the door, scarcely able to guide his steps. Suddenly he stopped short.

"Sir," said he, "I should like to go out to Mr. Barlow's place, and to—to say a word to—to—to warn him."

"He won't see you. He was incensed at my sending you to him last time. But, well, you'll see his grand-daughter, and that will be more to the point still. Very well, I give you leave to go. But—I don't envy you your mission!"

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The old man shrugged his shoulders and spoke in a tone of mockery. Merryon only bowed and went out.

What could he say? What could he believe? His head swam, his whole being seemed to be in a tumult of strife. Could he believe ill of that beautiful, queenly woman—one, too, who seemed not to have a wish or a whim ungratified? In the midst of his doubts and his torments one thing stood out clearly: his determination to say some word that might serve as a warning to the girl—might save the awful disgrace of exposure and ruin which seemed to be hanging over them all.

On the following day he was at Mr. Barlow's. He was furnished with the excuse of bringing under his notice a new improvement which was being brought out in connection with the lighting of their factory. Although it was wholly unnecessary that the old gentleman should be informed of this, yet he liked to hear of the changes made, and Miss Barlow listened to all the details of the plan with an attentive ear, in order that she might carry the news to her grandfather.

She was at least as nervous as Merryon himself when she met him, and the young manager wondered what were the thoughts which were passing through her mind.

More and more impossible it seemed to him to believe that she was the guilty wretch Mr. Johnstone described, as he looked at the lovely face, the delicate hands, the perfect figure, upon which a gown of pale grey silk, trimmed about the shoulders with a cascade of fine lace relieved by pearls, hung so gracefully. And yet it was clear that she was embarrassed in his society, that she watched him furtively when she could, and that occasionally a look of something even stronger than fear would appear in her eyes if he turned towards her suddenly, or asked her a question with any abruptness. She was an enigma, this handsome, self-possessed, luxury-loving young woman, who lived shut up in the country with her grandfather, and received his guests herself graciously and charmingly, without relation or chaperon.

It was after a slight pause in the conversation between these two, over the tea-cups, that Miss Barlow threw at him a strange, shy, furtive glance, and then said:—

"You are much in Mr. Johnstone's confidence, Mr. Dales, I understand?"

"I believe I may say I am, and I'm very proud of it," said he, simply, wondering what was coming next.

Miss Barlow was twisting the ends of her lace fichu nervously.

"I hope you deserve it," said she, quickly. "And yet I hope that if you were called upon to discharge a painful duty—a very painful duty—you would mingle mercy with your justice. If, for instance, you were to obtain evidence bringing home a serious crime to one whom—whom you had felt some slight interest in, perhaps, you—you would be considerate, wouldn't you? You would consider the circumstances—the temptation? You wouldn't be too hard—too unrelenting?"

As she spoke she drew nearer and nearer to him, and spoke with more and more fervour and charm of persuasive voice and earnest manner. Merryon was shocked, bewildered. Obviously and unmistakably she was trying to secure his neutrality—if not his active participation—in a crime.

Refusing to meet her lovely eyes, he said, in a low voice, but tremulously:—

"I—should—do my duty."

Miss Barlow sprang up in unmistakable anger.

"Oh, your virtue is quite too incorruptible!" she cried, in fierce mockery. "Robespierre was a reed compared to you! I congratulate the firm on their treasure of a manager! It makes up for much!"

Merryon had risen also, and was trembling from head to foot. But he stood his ground.

"I cannot believe," said he, in a low voice, "that you really think the worse of me for serving my employers well. I will not believe it."

"You have suspicions, I suppose?" said she, abruptly.

"I—I don't wish to have them!"

"And if your suspicions were correct, you would have no blind eye?"

He found courage to raise his eyes to her face, and to say, firmly:—

"I should have no blind eye. I should be, as you say, incorruptible as Robespierre."

He had expected a fresh outburst of her anger, and was surprised to see something like a flash of admiration in her eyes, which were candid enough in her various moods. After looking him steadily in the face for the space of a second, she made a slight gesture, as if washing her hands of the matter, and turned away with a rather forced smile.

"Then I have no more to say," said she, coldly. "And I must apologize for detaining you so long. Your time is valuable, I know."

She was curt, almost rude. But Merryon,

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in spite of his doubts, in spite of his better judgment, found an added charm in the struggle which was evidently going on within her — the struggle between some strong agitation within and the attempt to be as calm outwardly as if she were a statue.

He went away in a state of perplexity and torment impossible to describe. He had this one consolation: he should certainly have no further need to keep watch in the basement of the firm's place of business.

He told Mr. Johnstone so, without vouchsafing any explanation of his reason for thinking thus. But the senior partner, with his usual obstinacy, took no note of his protest, but insisted on the watch being kept up.

"If I'm wrong, I'll apologize to you," said the old gentleman. "If you're wrong, you shall apologize to me."

So again for three nights Merryon watched from the old wine-cellar, stiff, cold, impatient, and irritable at the old man's obstinacy. And on the third night Mr. Johnstone's suspicions were proved correct.

Merryon was dozing, as indeed he had begun to do pretty frequently, in the certainty that he was watching in vain, when he was suddenly aroused into full wakefulness by the unmistakable sound of the creaking of a door. Springing up, perhaps not quite master of his prudence in the startling circumstances, he dashed out of his hiding-place and discovered, even in the darkness, that the door of the strong-room was open. Without giving himself time for a moment's reflection, he sprang forward and, hearing a movement inside the strong-room, shut the door. It closed with a snap. There was a sound as of some weight hurling itself against it, and then there came to Merryon's ears a sort of sigh, so low, so blood-curdling, that he felt quickly for the key on his watch-chain, with an intuition that he was on the eve of some awful tragedy.

Before he could find the lock, in the darkness which was almost complete, he heard a double report, and knew that he was too late.

A spasm of agony seized him and rendered him for a few seconds incapable of movement. Then, to his unutterable relief, for the dead, solemn silence was terrible to bear, he heard footsteps approaching him from the staircase, and saw a light thrown, flickering and trembling, on the brick walls. The next moment John Hyde, the old watchman, appeared at his side, carrying his lantern in his hand, and full of concern.

By the light, held high, Merryon managed to open the door of the strong-room, though the dead silence within prepared him for the worst.

What terrible fear he had at his heart he would not acknowledge even to himself. But as he saw the black mass that a few moments before had been a breathing, living fellow-creature on the floor of the strong-room, it is certain he was all unprepared for the discovery he made when, kneeling on one knee, old John Hyde raised the lifeless form and revealed to the manager's amazed eyes the dead face of the junior partner of the firm — Bernard Blake!

The unhappy manager uttered an exclamation of despair. At the same moment he felt a light touch on his arm.

"Hush!" said a woman's voice, "it was not your fault. You couldn't help yourself. I can bear witness to that."



"OLD JOHN HYDE RAISED THE LIFELESS FORM."

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Merryon turned, too much stunned to be capable of more surprise.

"I—I didn't know you were there, Miss Barlow," he stammered, stupidly.

"Of course not. I didn't mean that you should. But I have watched as well as you, for the last three weeks. And I knew—I guessed—how it would end."

She was calm with the calmness of despair.

"What—does it—mean?"

They were just outside the door of the strong-room. The watchman had put down his lantern, and was running up the stairs as fast as he could in search of the doctor, who could do nothing, as they all knew, but certify the death by suicide of the unhappy man on the strong-room floor.

"It means, unhappily," said Miss Barlow, down whose cheeks the tears were running fast, "that the man who stole before has tried to steal again, and, being discovered, made away with himself."

"But I can't believe—did you suspect?" stammered Merryon.

"It was Mr. Johnstone who suspected first, as you know. He communicated his suspicions to my grandfather, and he to me. I wouldn't—couldn't believe; but, with my grandfather's sanction, I took upon myself to watch. I have let myself in, night after night, by a way you don't know of, from the cellar of the adjoining house. My grandfather, I must tell you frankly, suspected *you*. I did not."

Merryon was silent, sick at heart, and horribly miserable. The utter unexpectedness of the discovery he had made was appalling.

It came out later that the life of extravagance which the junior partner led had made it impossible for him to be satisfied with his own handsome share of the profits of the firm. Miss Barlow having rejected the suit which would have brought him a fortune, he had, in an evil hour, yielded to the temptation of entering the strong-room at night, taking out the celebrated necklace, and disposing of the stones in Paris and elsewhere, as it was easy for him to do on his various business journeys on behalf of the firm.

Mr. Johnstone received the news of the tragedy without surprise. The shrewd old man had had doubts of the integrity of the dashing young partner at a very early date. And his keenness of insight was established, not only by his doubts of Bernard Blake, but by the perfect trust he had always had in the integrity of the young manager, Merryon Dales, to whom he, with Mr. Barlow's consent, at once offered that place in the firm which had been occupied by the dead man.

Merryon was overwhelmed.

He made two formal visits—the one to Mr. Johnstone to thank him, the second to Mr. Barlow. The latter he did not see.

Not that that mattered much, for he saw Mr. Barlow's grand-daughter, who looked him full in the face and said, quietly, after the first words were over:—

"You suspected *me*, Mr. Dales!"

Merryon, taken aback, told the truth.

"I did, Miss Barlow."

"And pray what particular circumstance about me made you think I was a thief?" she asked, with a certain mutinous haughtiness which was inviting instead of repellent.

For it induced Merryon suddenly to take heart of grace and to say:—

"I didn't only suspect you to be a thief. I knew you were one!"

At the first moment Miss Barlow looked amazed; then she reddened and began to understand.

"Those compliments are rather old-fashioned," she said, at last.

"As old-fashioned as love at first sight itself," retorted Merryon.

"We won't talk about those subjects; they're silly," said Miss Barlow.

But in spite of these airs of superiority she seemed rather to invite than to repel any fresh attempt to lead the conversation into those channels where the man in love would have it flow.

And when she at last let Merryon Dales take his leave, she detained him so long on one trifling pretext or another that he was seized with another inspiration, and suddenly kissed her.

"I'd been expecting that," said she.

But her manner was not so calm as her words would have led one to imply. And it dawned upon Merryon, with a new and delightful surprise, as he went homewards with the sound of her voice ringing in his ears, and the touch of her hand tingling on his arm, that she had perhaps been in love with him just as long as he had been in love with her.

And that was the real truth of the matter.

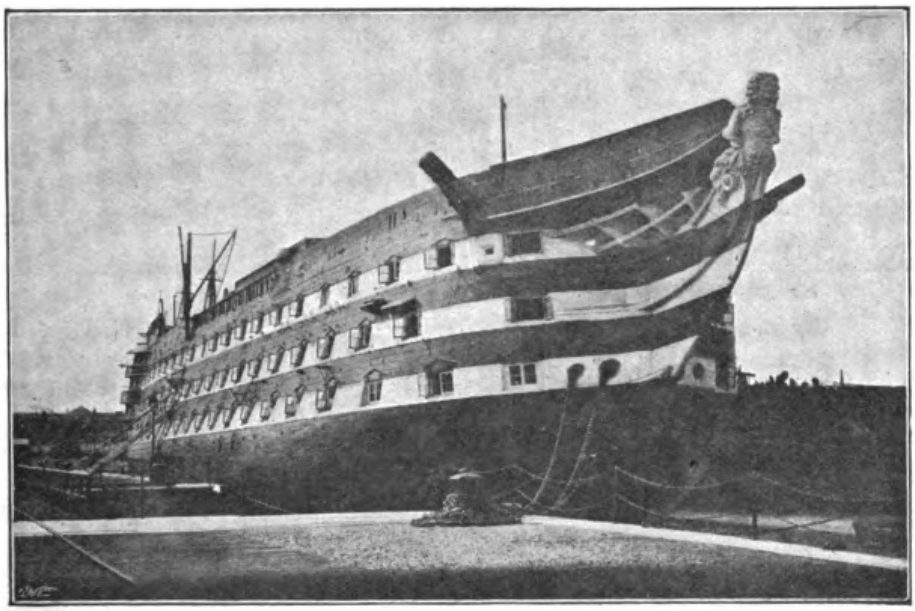
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The King's Naval Engineers.

By Alfred T. Story.

THERE is not perhaps in this wide-reaching Empire of ours a more useful and important section of our fighting strength than the Engineers of the Royal Navy. We are justly proud of our Navy, and we should be very ungracious if we were not, after what it has done for us at nearly every critical period of our history. We are proud of everything connected with it—of the tar, of the executive officer, of the marine, even though we do occasionally gibe him. But there is one item in the *personnel* of the Navy which the public generally are apt to overlook, partly no doubt because, being a modern addition, he does not appear in the naval histories, and has, as yet, no place in the songs and chanties of the Navy. But he is bound to figure very largely in future annals, and if he does not then shine in the ballads it will be the poet's fault, not his—if, that is, British pluck is to remain British pluck still. I refer, of course, to the engineer, to the man who has command of the driving power of the ship; to him who, because his chief duties lie below decks, and he does not appear so much in the pictures, is apt to be lost sight of by the popular eye. This should not be; for no one in the personal equipment of a man-of-war is more important or has a more arduous duty to perform than the engineer officer.

The engineer, like the executive, officer is specially trained for the work of the Navy; and perhaps a few words about his training will give as good an idea of what he is, and what his duty, as anything that one can write. In the early days of steam navigation naval engineers were trained in the dockyards, where they were apprenticed for a term of years. After examination they were passed into the Service. In those days their position was not so good as it is to-day. The next step as regards their special training was the establishment of the *Marlborough* as a school for Naval Engineer officers. The old battleship did good service in this respect, and it is not very clear why it was done away with. Its place is now taken by the Royal Naval Engineers' College at Keyham, Devonport.



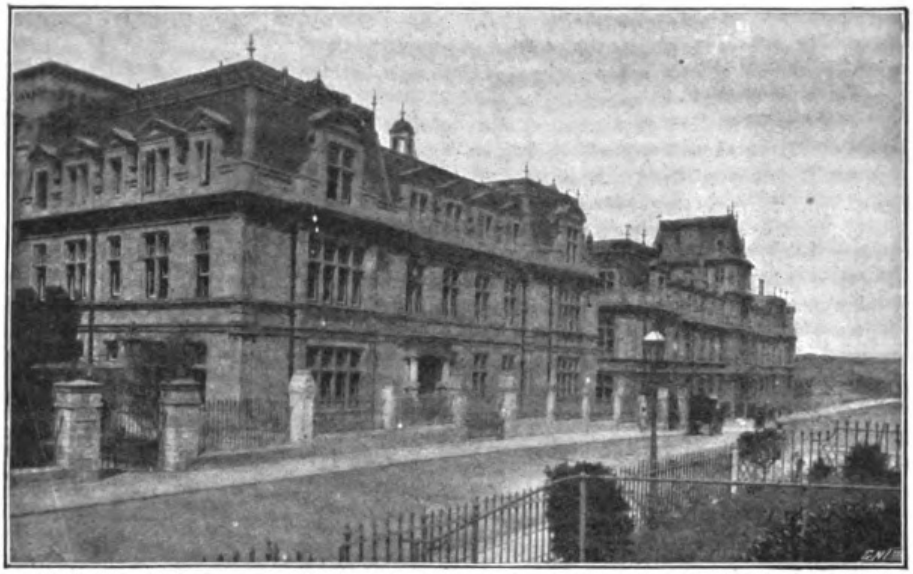
THE "MARLBOROUGH," FORMERLY USED AS A SCHOOL FOR NAVAL ENGINEER OFFICERS.
From a Photo. by Symonds & Co., Portsmouth.

Keyham is governed by a naval staff, and has in addition its corps of instructors. A student enters at from fifteen to seventeen years of age, and his period of training is five years; but if he be successful enough to gain 60 per cent. of possible marks in his fourth year, and has a good report as to character from each department, he is permitted to pass out of the college after four years' study.

Keyham is no play place. The student

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spends the first three years of his time in the fitting shop, his hours running to about 7½ per diem. Two mornings he attends school instead of going into the factory, and two evenings he has to put in a couple of hours in the same way, besides attending a lecture on Wednesday evenings. Other evenings are leave nights. A junior, however, in his first year, while the one who gets only 30 per cent. counts none of it, but serves as a probationary assistant-engineer, and though he wears the same uniform and is in most respects treated similarly to the rest, he cannot be held responsible for watches, and may be dismissed from the Service without court-martial. Moreover, his pay is 6s. a



From a Photo. by] THE ROYAL NAVAL ENGINEERS' COLLEGE AT KEYHAM, DEVONPORT. *[J. Valentine.*

first year has to spend one of his leave evenings in learning to row and swim. This is in the summer months: in the winter the gymnasium must be his resort; and if the unfortunate junior does not attain a certain degree of proficiency in these arts in his first year he must go on for a second. This training is very essential; for the engineer officer, as we shall see, may sometimes have to jump, row, or even swim, for his life.

After his third year the student must go through a short course in each of the following trades, namely, that of coppersmith, blacksmith, brassfounder, pattern-maker, and boiler-maker; the idea being, of course, that when the students become officers they will have a better idea how the men under them are doing their work from having done it themselves than if they merely read about it in books.

The student who gets 60 per cent. of possible marks at his final "exam." is entitled to go to the Naval College at Greenwich for a year, at the end of which time he is again examined, and if he be fortunate enough to obtain a first-class certificate, the commission to which he is now entitled is dated back a year. The student who gets 50 per cent. of marks counts six months of his day instead of 7s. 6d. If, however, at the end of the year he is not unsatisfactorily reported on by his superiors, he gets his commission and his extra pay.

On obtaining his commission the engineer officer must serve five years before being promoted to the position of engineer. Most likely he is sent to a battleship or a big cruiser, where, being the junior, or "boots," as he is facetiously called, he is more or less at everybody's beck and call. He now begins to get his real experience, and of course he pays for it. Possibly he may drop in for a treat similar to the following, described to me by a very amiable officer. Said he: "When I was a youngster, and my jackets were mostly new and all fairly good, I was one day told off to assist in a steam trial, during which it became necessary for me to go into one of the engine-rooms to report something or other to a superior officer. About the same time a slide-rod on one of the engines got warm, and the contractors, with that reckless extravagance which characterizes them, were endeavouring to allay this local irritation with a mixture of oil and plumbago, which they were applying by means of garden squirts holding something over a quart each. It fell out that I

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emerged through the middle-line water-tight door at the same moment that one of these oilers made a bad shot for the rod, with the result that I got the lot. It didn't taste nice, and, as it mostly ran down inside, my wearing apparel was not improved."

Said I: "How I should like to have a picture of that incident."

"No doubt," was the reply; "and if you will find the man and let me handle the squirt this time, you shall have one." The reader must judge of the result.

While still a probationer the young engineer usually keeps watch with some other engineer officer who is responsible for the watch. On the expiry of his first year, however, he goes into regular watches — generally three, namely, one watch of four hours and two off, with the usual arrangement of dog-watches.

The senior engineer—that is, the one next in seniority to the chief—has the entire management of the department, and arranges the watches for all his subordinates, and details the duties of each, while the supreme head is the chief, who is directly responsible for the department. The senior engineer usually keeps one watch a day, it being a regulation that all officers under the rank of chief must keep at least one watch of four hours a day. He is usually the hardest-worked man in the ship; night or day, the rule is, when in doubt send for the senior; if the case be serious he sends for the chief. It may be that for some reason a pump gives out and one of the boilers is short of water. He jumps down into the engine-room, and perhaps finds himself facing a boiler with no water showing in the gauge-glass; in which case he is within measurable distance of a violent death by explosion of the boiler. Or it may be that a steam-pipe has given way—an event not so critical as the bursting of a boiler, perhaps, but one requiring strong nerve and great presence of mind in the engineer. The breaking of almost the smallest pipe will soon fill the engine-room with steam and endanger the life of every man in it. Most engineers have gone through acute experiences in this respect, and not a few tragic deaths are recorded from the same cause. Here is a case in point. An engine-room artificer, who was below when the bursting of a pipe took place, got his lungs so full of steam that, on reaching the deck, which, of course, he made for at once, he fell down dead. The sudden contact of the cool air with the steam in his lungs caused instant death.

Sometimes an officer's presence of mind is such that by sticking to his guns, so to speak, he is able to avert disaster as great as if he threw a live shell overboard. Such an act was done by Mr. F. H. Hutchings as assistant-engineer of H.M.S. *Speedy*. When she was undergoing her steam trial a small steam-pipe burst, and he, at great personal risk, succeeded in closing the valve that supplied the pipe. Steam at 200lb. pressure per square inch is not nice stuff to fool with, as anyone who has had experience of it knows. Not every man, even though in other respects of good courage, possesses the nerve and presence of mind to do what Mr. Hutchings did. During the operation he inhaled a considerable amount of steam, and as soon as he reached the deck from the steam-laden atmosphere below he fell into a swoon. For this gallant act Mr. Hutchings was, by special Order in Council, raised to the rank of engineer.



MR. R. W. TOMAN, CHIEF ENGINEER OF H.M. TORPEDO-BOAT DESTROYER "FOAM."
From a Photo. by H. Dowden, Bootle.

An equally gallant act was performed by Mr. R. W. Toman, while chief engineer of

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H.M. torpedo-boat destroyer *Foam*. Whilst H.M.S. *Foam* was running at the speed of twenty-seven knots on a steam trial her intermediate pressure cylinder burst, and Mr. Toman was severely scalded about the arms and face in his brave and successful endeavour to turn off the main throttle valve in the engine-room. He then proceeded to shut off the main stop-valves of the boilers in the stokeholds, afterwards returning in the blinding steam and with his hands frightfully burnt to see if any of his men were still in the engine-room. For this gallant deed Toman received Her Majesty's commission as chief engineer and the Albert Medal, second class.

In his senior years the assistant generally spends some time in one of the dockyard reserves, where he lives in the depôt ship (the *Victory* at Portsmouth, the *Vivid* at Devonport, and the *Pembroke* at Chatham), and is detailed by the Inspector of Machinery of the port for various duties, such as the steam trials of new or repaired ships, looking after the machinery of vessels in the reserve, etc. Even in these quiet occupations he has arduous and not infrequently dangerous duties to perform. Not long ago an engineer officer lost his life in the *Audacious* when in the reserve under the following circumstances. In all battleships there is an inner and an outer bottom, the space between which has to be kept clean and in order like the rest of the vessel. The work of doing so is attended with some danger, because this space is kept sealed up, and the inside becomes foul owing to the nature of the paint used for preserving the plates. On the occasion in question two men were at work in this space, when one of them was overcome by the bad air. Mr. Booth, one of the engineer officers on board, went down to assist him, and got him part of the way out, but was then overcome himself. A stoker succeeded in bringing both out, but Mr. Booth was dead.

Until a year or two ago the rank of the engine-room artificer was that of a chief petty officer, and as he entered the Service with that rank he could not, however deserving, elevate himself from the lower deck. But by a recent Order in Council he can now rise to warrant officer, which entitles him to wear a sword and to live in the warrant officers' mess.

The assistant-engineer generally sees a good deal of service, and as there is always something going on to require warships in one part or another of our broad Empire, he is likely enough to get chances of distinguishing himself. The "records" contain numberless instances of distinguished services and acts of gallantry performed by young officers still wearing the broad and the narrow stripe. Mr. W. Whittingham, who was assistant-engineer of the *Sphinx* during the war in the Eastern Soudan (1884–5), distinguished himself by working a search-light on the occasion of a night attack, and was, I believe, very seriously wounded during the engagement. Mr. Whittingham now wears his two broad and one narrow stripe and is a staff engineer.

Many persons will probably recall to mind the wreck of the ill-fated ship *Warren Hastings*, carrying a large contingent of troops. Much was said at the time of the coolness and bravery displayed by the soldiers—a thing to be proud of, certainly; but little was said about the coolness of the engineers and their assistants, who, in the midst of the danger and turmoil, remained below to work the electric light the better to enable a landing to be effected.

Of another description was the service rendered by Mr. R. W. Edwards, at present chief of the *Powerful*, while assistant-engineer of the *Wolverine* in 1879. The *Wolverine* was at the time on the Australian Station, and as it was found necessary to punish the natives of Meran Sound, Ferguson Island, and Brooker's Island for repeated acts of murder and piracy, the boats were sent to destroy the native villages. Edwards was in charge of the steam-launch, which was towing up the other boats under the command of a lieutenant. Shortly after starting a storm came on, and the pintle of the rudder of the launch was broken, so that it was rendered useless. The rest of the boats accordingly went on without it, leaving the steam-launch to do the best it could. As the storm grew worse Mr. Edwards and his crew were in great danger, as the boat was not only unmanageable on account of the broken rudder, but because the storm had put out the fire. However, fertile in resource, the engineer found a piece of iron, out of which, after some trouble, he managed to contrive a new pintle. Then he made shift to re-light the fire, and so to get up steam; and no sooner was this done than away went the launch, as hard as she could go, after the other boats. They, in the meantime, had been badly knocked about by the storm, and, not having yet effected their purpose, were glad of the assistance of the launch to tow them up to

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the offending villages, which were duly "obliterated." This feat was considered—and justly—a very meritorious one, and the officers and crew of H.M.S. *Wolverine* received the warm thanks of the Admiralty.

Having completed his five years' time, the assistant is promoted to the position of engineer, and ships a narrow gold stripe on his sleeve in addition to his one broad stripe. He also becomes a wardroom officer, his pay at the same time being raised to 9s. a day. However, as he has to pay more for his messing, the actual increase is not much. These young officers entertain the hope that ere long "their Lordships" will, taking into consideration the very responsible duties they perform, make this increase a little more real, and will at the same time allow them to rank with, instead of *with, but after*, the young lieutenants and surgeons. This small and inexpensive concession on the part of the Admiralty would well repay them by removing a constant source of irritation, which cannot be good for the Service.



MR. H. BENBOW, CHIEF ENGINEER OF H.M.S. "SOFIA."
From a Photo. by Ball, Waterloo Place.

It is not until he has served six years that the engineer ranks *with* his other messmates. He is then entitled to mount the two broad stripes as evidence of his longevity. This is not so much a promotion, in fact, as a sign of an increase of pay, he being now, as senior engineer, advanced to 11s. per diem. His next step is to chief engineer. This goes by seniority, and depends on the number he may have above him; the chiefs' list being kept numerically the same, and as one goes through age, death, or elsewise, an engineer is promoted. At present thirteen and a half years of commissioned time brings a man to the head of the list; but from a variety of causes it becomes longer every day, and it is a matter of wonder to juniors whether they will ever live to be chiefs.

The chief wears two broad stripes, with a narrow one between, and after four years in that rank he becomes a staff engineer. This is a merely ornamental title; but after another four years he takes the rank of fleet engineer, and, besides wearing three broad stripes, mounts a plain band of gold round the peak of his cap.

When a man reaches the rank of chief he no longer holds any subordinate position, but is always in charge. The three ranks of chief, staff, and fleet engineer are more or less interchangeable. All are capable of taking charge of the machinery in any one of His Majesty's ships, and, theoretically, of doing anything that is required of them; though, of course, in practice native genius and inborn pluck will always be cropping up to differentiate.

Thus it is not every engineer who could do what Chief Benbow did in the Nile expedition for the rescue of General Gordon in 1884–85. It will be remembered by some that on that occasion Sir C. Wilson made a dash up to Khartoum in one of the Nile steamers, and that on his return he was wrecked on a small island in the river. Lord Charles Beresford went to his relief in the ss. *Sofia*, with Benbow in charge of the engine-room. On their way up the *Sofia* was struck several times by the enemy's shot, and one of them pierced the boiler, thus rendering it for the time being a *caput mortuum*. Then it was that what Lord Wolseley called the chief's "splendid courage and resource" came out, and in the coolest manner, under a hot fire, he personally repaired the damaged boiler. The Commander-in-Chief warmly thanked and praised Mr. Benbow for his brilliant feat, and as a personal testimony to his merits presented him with his own silver cigarette-case, to the great delight of the assembled blue-jackets, who, next to having a good go-in at a fight, enjoy seeing an act of bravery rewarded.

Of another character was the exceptional service rendered by Mr. J. P. Thomas when serving in the *Triumph* on the Pacific Station a few years ago. On that occasion the liner of one of her cylinders having become cracked and useless, a new one was sent out from England to replace it. But on arrival it was found to be so much too large for its purpose that it seemed almost impossible to fit it; chipping was out of the question, and there were no appliances in the dockyard at

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MR. J. P. THOMAS, ENGINEER OF H.M.S. "TRIUMPH."
From a Photo. by Russell & Sons, Chichester.

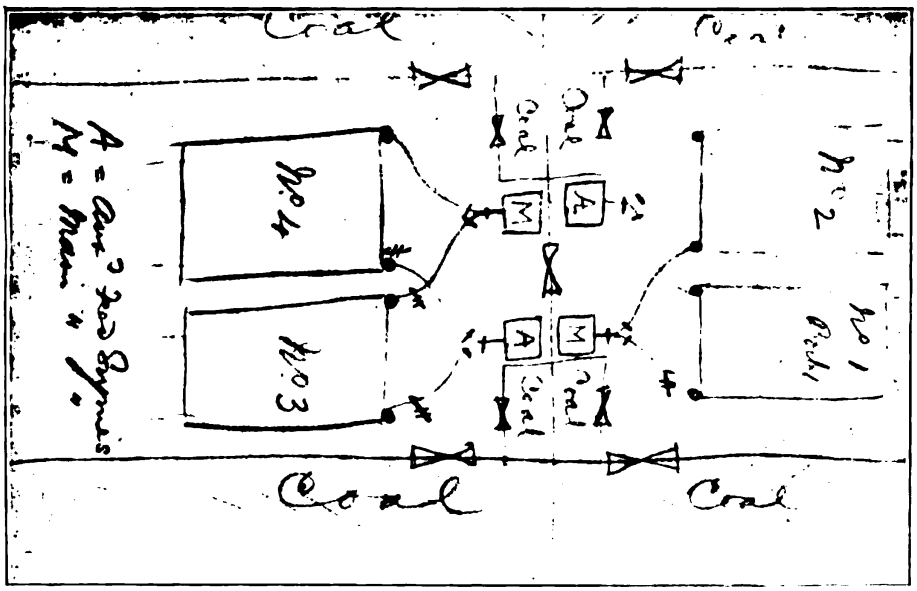
Esquimalt. Mr. Thomas, however, conceived the idea of utilizing the ship's capstan and a slide-rest from a large lathe, together with cutting tools devised for the purpose by himself, and succeeded in making as good a job of the liner as if it had been turned down in one of the home factories. The country was thus saved some hundreds of pounds and the *Triumph* was kept efficient on her station by this display of ingenuity, mechanical ability, and readiness of resource.

An experience of an entirely different character was that of Mr. William A. P. Smith, of the twin-screw torpedo-boat destroyer *Banshee*, who, in 1895, received the special thanks of the Admiralty for his "praiseworthy conduct" on the occasion of a fracture occurring in the main steam-pipe of H.M.S. *Barrosa* while serving on the West Coast of Africa. His presence of mind not only prevented a possible disaster, but was the means of saving valuable lives. Equally plucky, but most remarkable for the resource displayed, was the action of Mr. Joseph H. Pill, now staff engineer of the *Apollo* twin-screw cruiser, when in charge of the Indian gunboat *Plassy*. As the experience was one of an exceptional, if not unique, character it is worth giving somewhat in detail, as showing what a naval engineer's duties and responsibilities are like in times of difficulty. The *Plassy*, along with her sister ship, the *Assaye*, left Plymouth on the 25th of February, 1892. Very bad weather was experienced after passing Cape Finisterre, and in the middle watch of the 27th the main feed-pipe to No. 1 boiler burst (at the point marked with an arrow in the diagram). They were steaming with Nos. 1 and 2 boilers only. "It will be seen," says Mr. Pill's account, written in a letter to a friend, "that the main feed could not be used on either of these boilers until we disconnected the burst pipe and blank-flanged at the Y-piece common to the two pipes. Started the auxiliary feed-engine and got the aft boilers under way in case the auxiliary pipes of Nos. 1 and 2 boilers gave out; 8.30 a.m., shut off forward boilers and switched on the aft boilers; 11.15 a.m., main feed-pipe on No. 3 boiler burst. Both main feed-engines were now out of it until



MR. J. H[illegible] ENGINEER OF H.M.S. "APOLLO."
From a Photo. by Honey & Co., Chatham.

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SKETCH-PLAN OF THE BOILER-ROOM OF THE "PLASSY." BY MR. ENGINEER J. H. PILL.

blank-flanges were made. By the time we had blank-flanged in for'ard stokehold the water had risen to the under sides of the boilers and we began to 'raise steam' in the bilge.

"Of course, you will understand that we were in a mountainous sea, with a head wind which was logged as of force 'eleven.' At 12.15 I find by my notes that we were rolling our bilge-water on to bunker bulkheads, and on to my wing gauge-glasses, which burst, causing no little annoyance to those in the stokehold; 2.0 p.m., auxiliary feed valve-box of No. 4 boiler gave out, etc. So that now, of the eight main and auxiliary feed-pipes five were either burst or leaking very badly. The fire-engine suctions to the bilge very soon choked after the bilge-water rose into the ash-pits and washed the ashes, etc., into the bilge. The bunker-lids, I should say, were working back on account of the shivering of the ship, and thus allowed the water to get into the wing-bunkers and thence to the bilge. During the afternoon two lids were washed overboard, and then the water came in wholesale, until a plucky stoker, whose name I forget, succeeded in nailing some canvas over these holes.

"Here is an extract from my notes: 'February 28th, 2 a.m.—Great difficulty in keeping fires alight. Most of the deck spanners, etc., washed from their places by a huge sea, which temporarily buried the ship and washed away the starboard whaler. The fires of Nos. 3 and 4 boilers being threatened, those of Nos. 1 and 2 were again got under way—the water in forward stokehold not being quite so high—and kept alight as well as possible by carrying coal from the aft stokehold, and wading through water which was now rolling knee-deep.

"'Our greatest difficulties were in the stoke-hold—that is, keeping the fires going and the boilers fed with water. When the weather showed signs of improving, and the navigator got his "position," the ship's head was pointed to Vigo. I left the stokehold and got to my cabin (where I had some ship-biscuit), looking into the engine-room *en route*. All correct there, except that the air-pump barrel holding-down bolts appeared strained.

"'I had not been two minutes in the cabin when an enormous wave came tumbling after the ship and threw up her stern. This threw the water out of the boilers into the engines. Rushed to engine-room, and—what sights and sounds saluted my eyes and ears I am not likely to forget! Circulation stopped. Feed-tanks overflowing full bore to platforms, heaving and banging in cylinders, air-pump sway-beams distorted, air-pump buckets evidently smashed in pieces, and engines endeavouring in a roundabout way to grind them up. Dare not stop both engines for fear of ship "broaching-to!" Stopped starboard engine, disconnected the sway-beams, and tied them back out of the way of the engines. Opened soda-cock on top of condenser, and worked a non-air-pump engine, stationing a man at the starting-wheel to "link up," so as to insure the steam being at atmospheric pressure when leaving L.P. cylinder. Did ditto with the port-engine, and then we let her have it, and scampered along as best we could to get into Vigo that night.'

"And now for another excerpt from my notes: '7.20 p.m.—Finished with engines; 27in. of water in bilges. Estimated quantity of water in bilges 150 tons, which took all hands four and a half days to remove by buckets. The small coal and ashes which choked the pump-suctions were found to be as compact as a block of patent

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fuel and had to be chipped and burnt out.'"

Mr. Pill adds: "I shall never forget the excellent behaviour of the E. R. staff, which, by the way, was at two-thirds complement for the passage out. Shouting orders in the stokehold would have been of little use on account of the roaring of the bilge-water, etc.; but one had only to point and the job was done with the utmost alacrity and an exhibition of faith that the best was being done."

At the age of fifty-five the naval engineer is compulsorily "retired." Fifty used to be the age; but, the Navy being at present under-staffed as regards the engineer department, the Admiralty are retaining all till fifty-five. If a vacancy occurs in the inspector of machinery list before a fleet engineer is fifty-five he may be promoted to an inspectorship, the officer at the head of the list usually, though not invariably, securing the appointment. The inspector's duties are all on shore. There is one at each of the principal naval ports, both at home and abroad. He is the head of the engineering branch of all reserves, and has a number of engineer officers under him in each port, as when an officer has done a three years' turn abroad he generally gets a spell of home duty, either in one or other of the dockyards or in the Channel Squadron.

These are the rules upon which the Service revolves. But exceptions are sometimes made in cases of extraordinary service. For example, Mr. Benbow was promoted to Inspector of Machinery for his services in the Soudan. Another officer specially promoted for exceptional service was the late Fleet Engineer H. G. Bourke, who was in charge of the engines of the *Calliope* at Apia, Samoa, when, on the 16th and 17th of March, 1889, she was caught in a "terrible hurricane, which caused a disaster unprecedented since the introduction of steam, the total loss of four (foreign) men-of-war out of seven, with a loss of 130 lives, and the stranding of two others." But for the plucky conduct of the engineer officers and those under them, and of course the strength of the engines which were able to withstand the strain put upon them, the *Calliope* must have gone with the other ships.

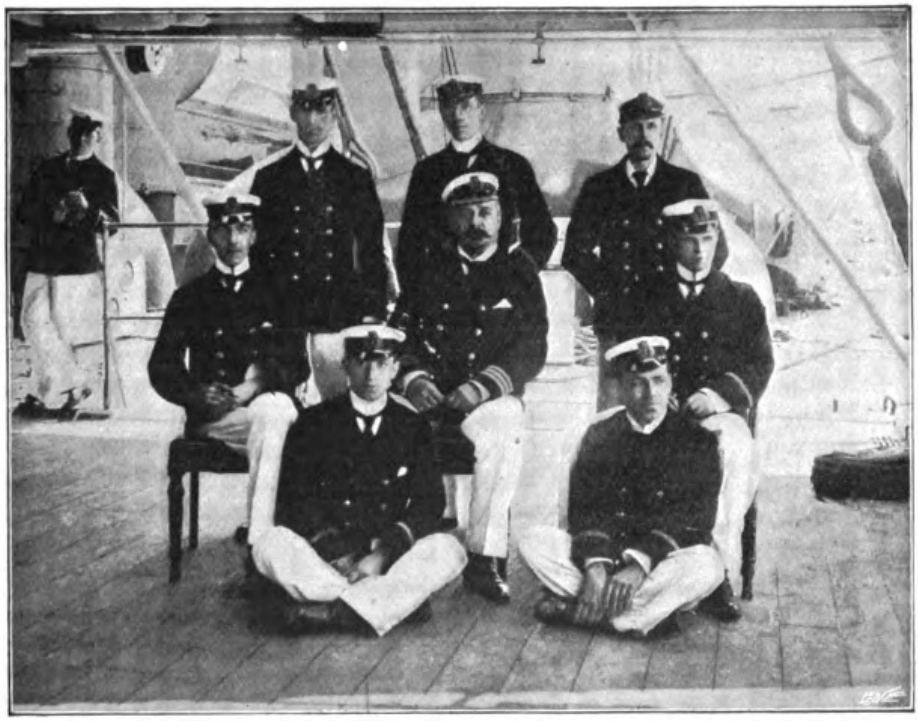
Occasions like these are doubly trying to those in the engine-room and stokeholds. For not only are they ignorant of what is going on, except in a general way, but in case of disaster they have the least chance of anyone on board. The foundering of the *Victoria*, flag-ship of Vice-Admiral Sir George Tryon, when she collided with H.M.S. *Camperdown* and went down off Tripoli in June, 1893, is a case in point. Of the seven engineer officers on board only one was saved, namely, Mr. Rawlingson, Constructor of Machinery at Portsmouth. Fortunately, when the disaster took place, his duty was on deck, and when the bugle sounded to quarters he ran to his post, and so when the *Victoria* rolled over he was thrown into the water free of the ship. Although carried down several times by drowning men clinging to him, and nearly exhausted, he was eventually picked up. Most of the engineers, along with the stokers and firemen, were below at the post of duty when the accident occurred, and what happened to them down there can only be conjectured. Said one who witnessed the disaster from a neighbouring ship: "When she rolled over all the men in the engine-room must simply have been pitched headlong into the machinery, and as it continued working to the moment of going down, as was evident from the revolving propellers, they can hardly have escaped being pounded to bits by the engines."



THE LATE MR. H. G. BOURKE, ENGINEER OF H.M.S. "CALLIOPE."
From a Photo. by Charlemont & Co., Sydney, N.S.W.

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It need scarcely be pointed out how much the efficiency of the Navy depends on the gentlemen who form the engineering department both as regards their training and the *esprit de corps* that is developed amongst them. They constitute so important a factor of our fighting strength—for what would the whole organization of our sea power be in case of new Armada battles or fresh Trafalgars to be fought if the engineers were not equal to the strain?—that the Admiralty will make a vast mistake if they keep it subordinate in importance and inferior in numbers to what is required.



ENGINEER OFFICERS OF H.M.S. "TERRIBLE." IN CENTRE OF THE MIDDLE ROW, MR. CHASE; ON HIS RIGHT, MR. ARTHUR; ON HIS LEFT, MR. MURRAY. [*Photograph.*

From a]

It is greatly to be regretted that there is much cause for irritation among engineer officers on account of their treatment. Not only does an engineer rank below a surgeon and a paymaster, but he has not even command over the men in his own department. They may be taken and put to other duties without his consent or knowledge; and if a squad of them be sent on shore, they must go in charge of an executive officer. In short, he has always been, and is yet, kept in an inferior position, and he feels it. Moreover, he does not always get credit when credit is due. Here is an instance in point. An engineer on board the *Terrible*, now in China, but which, as will be remembered, did such magnificent service in Natal in the early days of the late war, writes:—

"Of course you have heard all the talk about the gun-carriages of Captain Scott. No mention, however, is made of our branch getting out the drawings, doing the whole of the iron-work, etc. The skipper gets his C.B.——"

The writer goes on to say (which shows that the naval engineer is not always forgotten): "Arthur (our senior engineer) was up with the Naval Brigade at the front for four months looking after guns; also another —Murray—with the search-light. Arthur was with the Naval Brigade that took its guns into Ladysmith, so he will get medal, clasps, etc." *

It has been well remarked (by Sir B. Brown) that what the Royal Engineers are to the Army so ought the Naval Engineers to be to the Navy. That idea could not be better illustrated than by what occurred at Ladysmith, where, if no Naval Engineer officers had accompanied the Naval Brigade, the results might have been very different. Captain Scott's 4·7 gun-mountings proved somewhat defective after a few rounds were fired. Luckily, however, there were several Engineer officers and two engine-room artificers among the party. Moreover, the fleet engineer of the *Terrible* (Mr. Chase) had thoughtfully sent a portable forge, anvil,

* Since the above was written Mr. Arthur has died in China of enteric.

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angle-bars, bolts, etc., so that when the bolts which secured the timber framework sheared, the Engineer officers took the carriages to pieces, forged new bolts, and re-made the carriages, and as they could not do the work during the day, on account of the Boers firing on them, they did it in two consecutive nights.

Equally worthy of note is the fact that to Engineer Sheen, of the *Powerful*, belongs the credit of making distillers out of a lot of ¾in. copper piping, turning it into coils, and using a railway watering-tank for its circulating water supply. On the third day after getting his apparatus rigged up Mr. Sheen was producing water at the rate of 15,000 gallons a day, and he kept the troops going with fresh drinking water for a couple of months, until, in short, the coal supply for his boiler ran out. Thus were many lives saved from enteric fever. Talk of the "handy man"!



MR. C. C. SHEEN, ENGINEER OF THE "TERRIBLE."
From a Photo. by M. Mumeya, Hong Kong.

As regards the augmentation of the Engineer Department, "my Lords" of the Admiralty have, within the last three years, taken a very wise step in the right direction, by instituting courses of instruction for the engineer officers of that valuable adjunct to the Service, the Royal Naval Reserve at Portsmouth, for a period of training in the methods of the Navy and in naval machinery with which they would not otherwise have had the opportunity of making themselves acquainted. By means of this instruction the Reserve officers are enabled, in case of emergency, at once to fall into their respective places in the Navy, according to appointment.

Of six recently called up for duty at Portsmouth the senior was Mr. W. J. Willett-Bruce, junior superintendent-engineer of the White Star Company's service. Mr. Bruce is a man of exceptional training and intelligence, and, though he claims for engineers in the merchant service ability equal to those of the Navy, he admitted that the duties of the latter were of a much wider scope and range. Their responsibilities are consequently greater in proportion, and require a wider knowledge, inasmuch as they are obliged to manipulate and keep in order powerful hydraulic machinery for actuating the heavy guns, barbettes, turrets, ammunition lifts, etc.; also are responsible for the delicate mechanism of the guns themselves; and beside this they are likewise responsible for the perfect condition of the internal machinery of the various types of torpedoes, including both the ordinary and submerged tubes, together with much else that is a sealed book to the ordinary McAndrew.



MR. W. J. WILLETT-BRUCE, OF THE ROYAL NAVAL RESERVE
From a Photo. by Ambrose, Liverpool.

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Some Wonders from the West.

XLV.—A RUNAWAY CAR.

By Clifford L. Higgins.

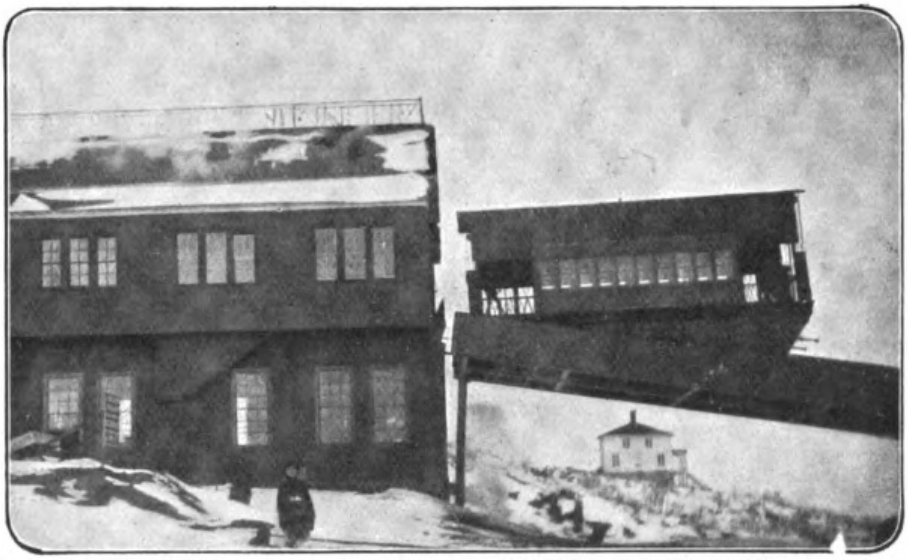
DULUTH, Minnesota, called by its admirers the "Zenith City by the Unsalted Sea," is stretched out like an immense shoe-string along the shores of Lake Superior. Immediately behind the city and beginning almost at the shore of the lake is a line of hills 600ft. high, stretching the full length of the city. Built upon the hillsides, each house, directly above another, gives every resident an opportunity to view from his front porch one of the most beautiful and impressive sights in the North-West. Old Lake Superior in its fury or in its calmness is always strikingly impressive. The St. Louis River winding its way down the hill-sides, turning here and there through islands thick with wild wood and lakes of wild rice, where there abide fish and game in abundance, is a natural panorama that never wearies the eye. Farther down can be seen this beautiful river as it broadens out where along its banks are situated the great coal and ore docks, numerous grain elevators, and many railroad warehouses; and lying beside them are some of the best steamships afloat. This is indeed a place where rail and waters meet. The waters of this river pass through the Great Lakes, the St. Lawrence River, and thence into the Atlantic Ocean, while scarcely sixty miles away over this height of land is the Mississippi River gathering its waters for its jaunt to the Gulf of Mexico.

The summit of the hills of Duluth attracts thousands of visitors and tourists during the summer months, where they loiter for hours viewing with amazement the beautiful spectacle before them.

The best point upon the hill-top from which to view this magnificent scene was the Pavilion, a large frame structure in which vaudeville shows were given. In order to reach this building the visitor could ride up on a large car running on a steel incline-track, which in a distance of 3,600ft. rose to a height of 625ft. above the bottom.

There were two tracks, and as one car went up the other descended. Each car was partly built of steel, and weighed about twenty-seven tons. The cables which held the cars were made of 1 5-8th in. steel wire, and there were two of them. Of course, nearly every person that ever rode up on the car had discussed the question of what would happen if the car should break loose, and many theories were offered at various times.

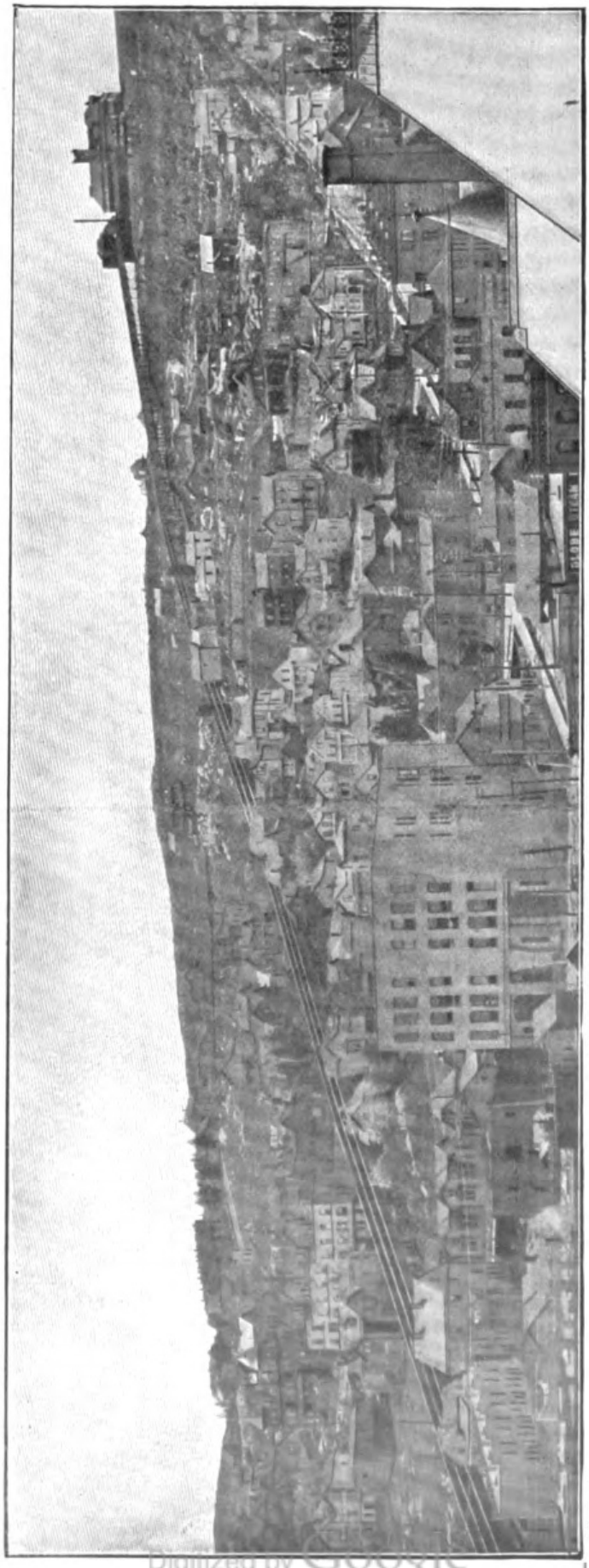
But on the morning of May 28th, 1901, the question was settled. About 8.30 a.m. fire was discovered in the power-house at the top of the hill. A fire-engine was hastily summoned and put aboard the car then at the bottom, and the car was run up to the top. There great difficulty was experienced in getting the engine off, as the men and horses had to drive through flames to get outside the power-house.



VIEW OF THE POWER-HOUSE AND CAR READY TO START, TAKEN BEFORE THE FIRE.
From a Photo. by Clifford L. Higgins.

After they had fought the fire in the power-house a few moments the wind suddenly carried it across to the Pavilion, only 25ft. away. As this was entirely frame-work and contained much scenery, etc., of an inflammable nature it was wrapped in flames in a few moments.

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GENERAL VIEW OF THE TRACK DOWN WHICH THE BURNING CAR RAN.

[Photo. From a]

There was no city water to be had at that height, and the only available supply was a 10,000-gallon tank, which was soon exhausted. Meanwhile nearly every person in the city was watching the fire from vantage points down town, and even from the neighbouring city of Superior, across the river on the Wisconsin shore.

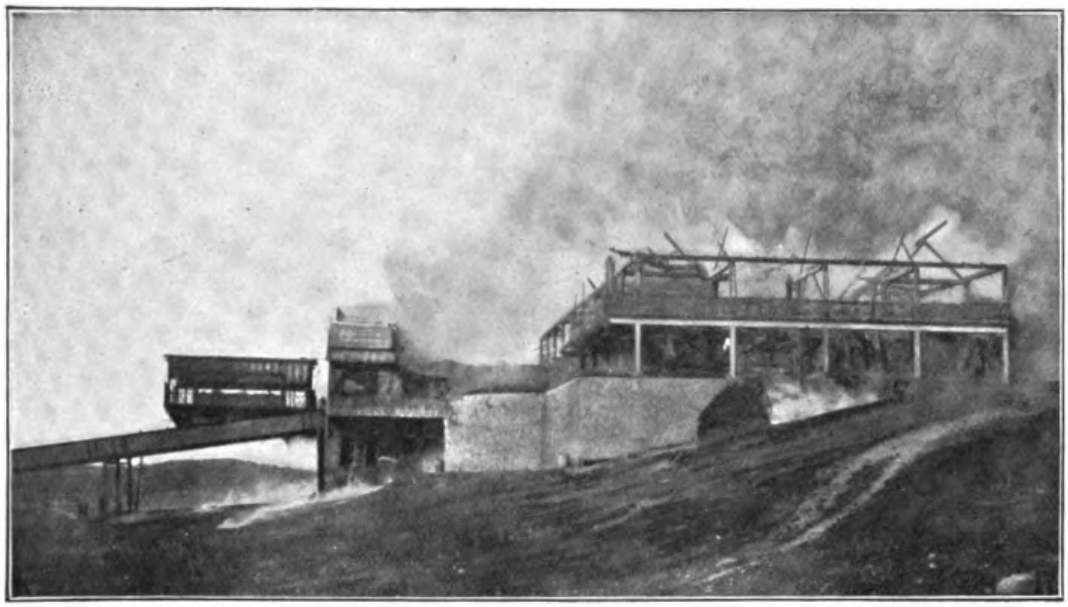
Thousands of eyes were fixed on the burning building and on the big car, as it stood at the top silently awaiting its time to make the most thrilling run that any person ever saw or could imagine.

As the flames grew hotter and hotter about it the car finally caught fire and began to burn. Gradually the Pavilion fell, and then piece by piece the iron superstructure of the power-house.

Of course, one question was on every lip, and that was, "Will the car get loose?" The engineer and two of his men, finding that the fire was gaining on them, turned their attention to the boilers, which were full of water to keep them from exploding, and then they tried to prevent the car from breaking loose. By that time it had grown so hot around the car that they could scarcely get near it, but they finally succeeded in getting three turns of the slack end of the big cable about an iron cross-beam of the track; but on account of the size of the cable, and the few moments available, they could not make a very secure job of it. All their tools were in the burning building, and they could not even get a wrench to break a joint in the line to derail the car.

Just as the last part of the power-house roof fell in the heat about the cable became intense, and suddenly the first cable melted. Half a minute later the other cable, unable to stand the awful strain, let go, and the car ran down about 4ft., with a snap jerked the tied end backwards round the beam, and with a crash started down the hill. At that instant probably 5,000 voices said in unison, "There she goes!" All eyes were riveted on

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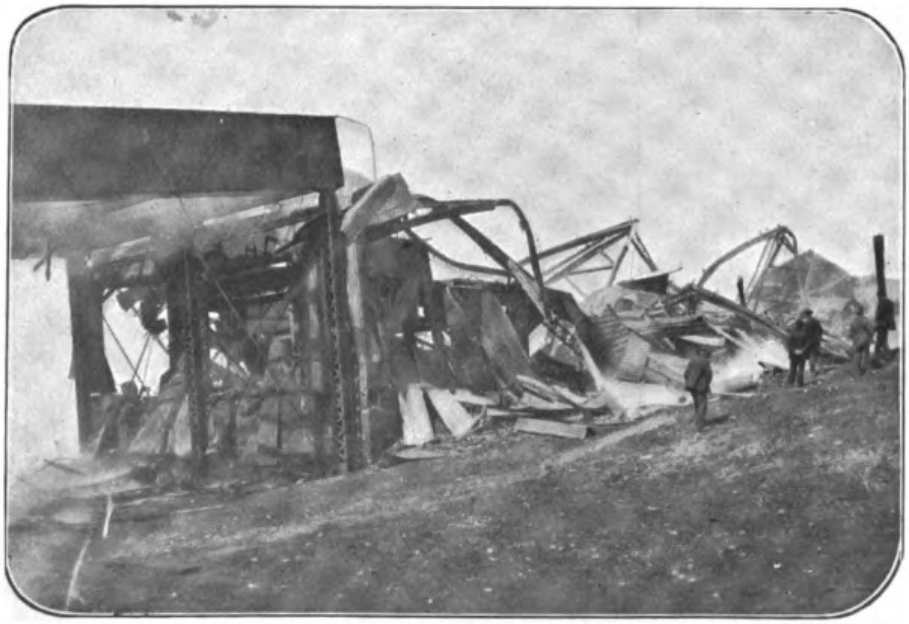
From a Photo. by] THE POWER-HOUSE ON FIRE--THE CAR NOT YET HAVING BROKEN LOOSE. *[C. Hall.*

the burning, flaming meteor as it started on its awful flight. During the first half of the run the car was somewhat retarded by the end of the cable striking the hard-wood cross-ties and breaking them, but as the car passed over the steeper part of the hill its speed increased, and the last half was made at a terrific rate. As it crossed the last street before it reached the bottom it seemed nothing more than a gigantic sky-rocket of smoke. The bottom of the incline was just on the edge of the sidewalk of the main business street, and the track runs into a pit, so that the floor of the car is just on the level with the sidewalk. The car body is large at the lower end and small at the upper end, being shaped like a wedge.

As the car hit the bottom there was an awful crash, and a puff of flame and smoke that went about 50ft. high. The wedge-shaped steel body embedded itself in the face of the granite wall about 3ft., and was literally smashed to pieces. The top, however, shot out across the street and down the avenue, scattering itself to pieces as it went, and carrying with it a large wooden waiting station, which it completely demolished and set on fire.

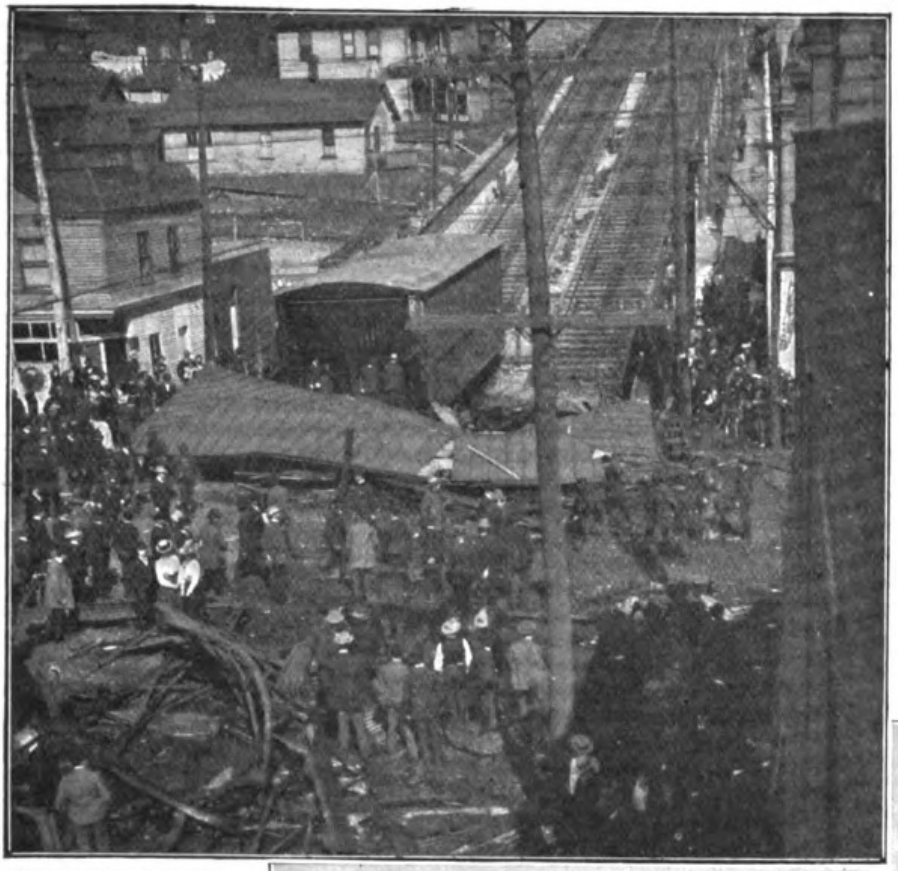
There were many houses and buildings alongside the track at the bottom, and the occupants of all these hurriedly moved out when told of the danger. Policemen kept everyone away from the bottom and stopped the street cars which had to pass in front of it. As the car made its awful run a number of women fainted at the sight. Many people had Kodaks and cameras, and yet during the run of the car not one picture was secured which showed it.

When the car struck and went to pieces, it not only threw burning brands all over the



THE RUINS OF THE POWER-HOUSE AND THE TOP OF THE TRACK, WHERE THE CAR STARTED.
From a Photo. by Clifford L. Higgins.

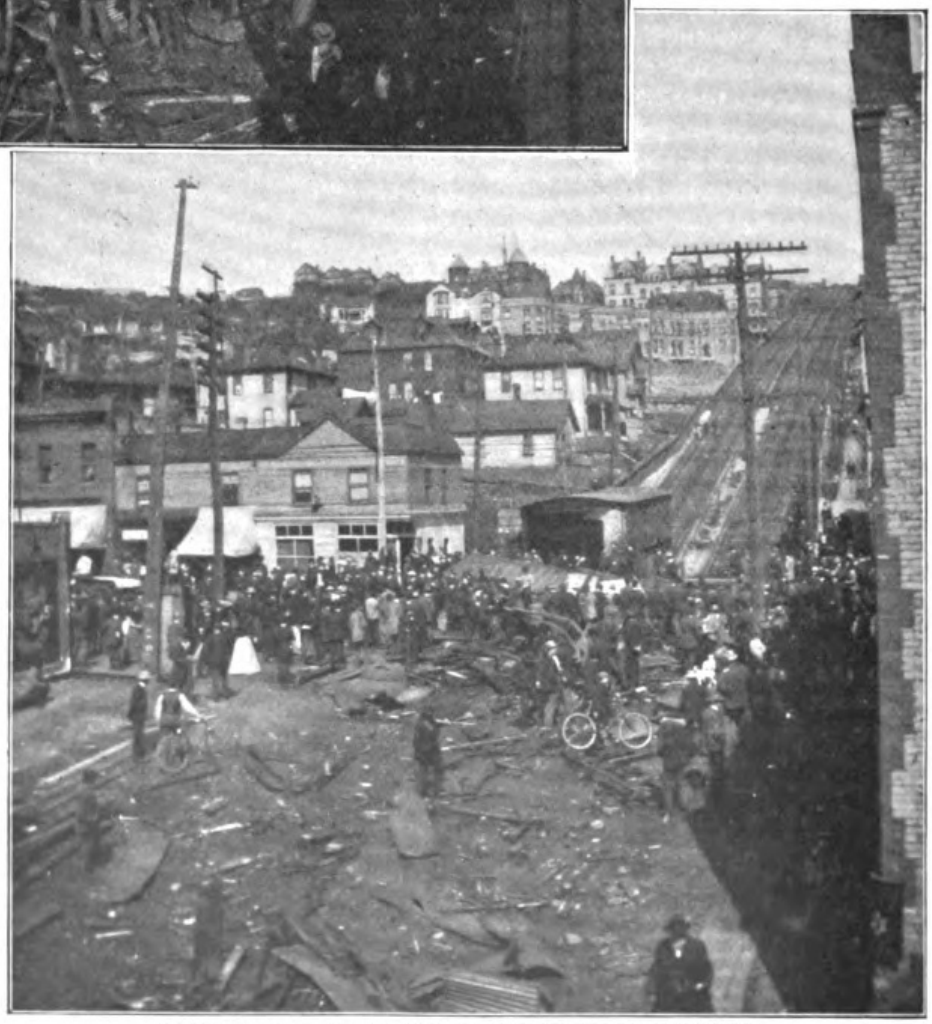
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VIEW OF THE CAR AND WRECKAGE.
From a Photo. by C Hall.

street and sidewalks, but set the *débris* of the wooden waiting station on fire. People became so excited by the flight of the car that, when it struck, three alarms were turned into the fire headquarters at the same time from different places. Everyone rushed to the scene of the wreck, and the police had a hard task in holding the crowd back to enable the firemen to quench the fire and clear away the wreckage. All sorts of rumours of people being killed were heard; but, wonderful to state, in reality no one was even injured.

Wild and varied were the estimates as to how long it took the car to make its last run down, but the watch of a cool-headed man who saw the entire run gave forty-three seconds as the actual time taken to cover the 3,600ft. descent.



GENERAL VIEW OF THE SCENE AT THE BOTTOM OF THE TRACK.
From a Photo. by Clifford L. Higgins.

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Kitty and Nibs.

By G. H. Page.

IN the little dining-room of a little house in a small London square four persons sat at breakfast—Clara and Isabel Hiles, two elderly maiden ladies, and Katherine and Cyril Boisragon Frere, known as Kitty and Nibs for short. The united ages of Nibs and Kitty made twelve.

It was a beautiful June morning, and outside the windows of the little room there was a glint of green trees and sunshine. The chittering of sparrows rose and fell on the ear. But within the room the mental atmosphere was more oppressive than usual, and the natural gaiety of the children was stifled into silence.

Unable to talk, they amused themselves by taking big bites out of their bread and butter, and then holding up the remaining piece to exhibit to each other the notched, semicircular hole cut out by their tiny teeth. Nibs took such a huge bite that the slice of bread and butter seemed to frill right round to his ears, and Kitty was convulsed with suppressed merriment. Nibs was an unfailing source of amusement and admiration to Kitty.

The little Freres were practically orphans, for their mother was dead and their father was far away in India. They had been put to live with the Misses Hiles, who boarded them and looked after them, but did not love them, for ten pounds a month.

Lately, however, the monthly cheque had not been forthcoming, nor was there any news from Captain Frere; and as week by week went by, and Kitty and Nibs continued to eat heartily and to require two helpings of pudding, and to kick out the toes of their shoes and to wear out the knees of their stockings, the faces of the Misses Hiles grew longer every day, and longer, too, the amount debited against Captain Frere's name in the red account-book, which Miss Isabel posted up scrupulously every night.

But now something had occurred which made the old ladies terribly anxious for the children's room rather than their company. Coronation week was drawing near. The Misses Hiles had received the offer of some boarders who would pay highly to be in town during the festivities. It was such an offer as no old ladies with narrow means and the love of gain could possibly refuse. Even had Captain Frere been paying regularly for the children it would have been hard to refuse. But considering that he was paying nothing at all; that, on the contrary, he was very much in their debt; that every mouthful of food the children took came actually now out of the Misses Hiles's pockets—no, really it was more than flesh and blood could tolerate.

"The children must go, that's flat," said Miss Isabel Hiles to her elder sister on the night that they received the proposed boarders' letter of terms.

"But where can they go to?" objected Miss Hiles, whose mind worked heavily.

"Well, they've got relations, I suppose? Didn't Captain Frere tell us of an aunt of theirs, his sister, living somewhere near Hampton Court? But I suppose she didn't approve of his marriage or something, since she has never taken any notice of her own nephew and niece. However, she'll have to take notice of them now, and time

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too. We'll speak to Kitty to-morrow and see if she can remember her aunt's address."

So, at breakfast next morning, Miss Isabel attacked Kitty on the subject which lay nearest her own interests.

"Stop those vulgar, dirty tricks, children," she said, sharply, in allusion to the "bites" competition. "You ought to be ashamed of yourself, Kitty, a big girl like you!" (Kitty was seven.) "Nibs, we know, is always a little guttersnipe, with no idea of manners." (There was open warfare between Miss Isabel and Nibs, who, aged five, showed himself stoically indifferent to the lady's taunts.) "Now, I want you to tell me about your auntie. You remember your auntie, don't you? You've got her picture up-stairs?"



"I WANT YOU TO TELL ME ABOUT YOUR AUNTIE."

Kitty did possess a photograph in a pretty silver frame which she had had ever since she was "quite a little girl." It represented a very kind-faced lady, whom dad had taught her to call auntie. Now that she had no one else to kiss, "'cept, of course, Nibs"—but then he was only a little boy and didn't count much in the kissing way—she used to kiss the picture every night before going to bed; but she had never seen auntie, and had the most confused, indefinite ideas concerning her.

So when Miss Isabel added, "Try to remember your auntie's address, Kitty. What is the name of the house or road she lives in?" Kitty remained silently gazing at Miss Hiles from troubled blue eyes.

"Come, come, child! Don't stare like a stuck pig!" said that lady, sharply. "You must have heard the address, I'm sure. Just think a little."

Now Kitty's eyes began to widen with tears and her sensitive mouth to tremble, but she managed to answer, bravely, "My auntie lives in Hampton Court"; and then, because she felt so dreadfully near crying, and because Miss Hiles was looking at her so unkindly, she took another bite of bread and butter to cover her embarrassment, and, forgetting it was forbidden, held the hole up for Nibs's inspection with a watery smile.

Miss Hiles, leaning forward, slapped her hand smartly for this disobedience, which was a relief to her own feelings, while Kitty broke into loud weeping from nervousness rather than pain.

Nibs was furious.

"You're a horrid old woman!" he cried, valiantly. "Why are you so cross to Kitty? I'll cut your head off with my sword!"

He slipped from his chair to find the weapon, and Miss Isabel informed him that he was a very naughty, rude, ungrateful little boy, and that she would lock him up in the black hole, and that the bears would certainly come and eat him up.

"There no bears," said Nibs, "'cept in India. And if you locked the door how would they get in?" Then other ideas stirred in his baby brain. "Oh, I wish we was in India, don't you, Kits? I hate this horrid old house and all the horrid old people in it."

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"And we don't intend to keep you in it much longer, I can tell you!" cried Miss Hiles, forgetting that her adversary was a child of five, almost ten times her junior in age. "We've put up with your bad manners and big appetites long enough, considering your papa doesn't pay a sixpence for you. Look at the loaf, Clara, though you'll need your glasses to see it. Those children get through a loaf a meal, I declare. However, I'll write before five to-day to tell Miss Frere —her name would be Miss Frere, of course? —to expect them, and I'll take them to Waterloo to-morrow by the blue 'bus in time for the 12.15 train."

"But how will you manage their boxes?" Miss Clara wanted to know.

"We shall keep their boxes here until Miss Frere sends for them and settles up," answered Miss Isabel, grimly. "They owe us close on twenty-nine pounds already, besides a pair of boots for the boy and quite a sovereign's worth of little things for Kitty. We shall keep their boxes."

So a letter was directed that day to "Miss Frere, Hampton Court"—a letter that was destined to be returned through the Dead Letter Office a week later, marked "Insufficient Address"—and next morning Miss Hiles took the children by omnibus to Waterloo, where she bought them half-single tickets, and gave these into Kitty's charge.

"Be sure you take care of them and don't drop them. Hold them in your hand the whole time. And don't get out of the train till you get to Hampton Court. There can be no mistake, because the train stops there altogether and goes no farther. Besides, your auntie will, of course, be there to meet you. I have written to tell her at what time you will arrive."

"Are we coming back again to live with you?" asked Kitty, dubiously.

"No, you're going to live with your auntie now," said Miss Hiles, "so give a nice kiss to poor Miss Isabel, who has been so kind to you, and say good-bye!"

Kitty allowed herself to be embraced, but Nibs dodged it successfully.

"I'll say good-bye," said he, "but I won't kiss you, and I hope I won't see you not never no more."

"You're a rude, naughty, ungrateful little gutter boy!" cried Miss Hiles, shrilly, as the train steamed out of the station, and for a long time her resentment against Nibs stifled the faint compunctions she felt for the thing she had done. For suppose Miss Frere were not at the station after all? What would become of the children with only half-tickets and not a penny in their pockets? Well, anyhow, it was no affair of hers. She could not be expected to support Captain Frere's children for the rest of their lives. She resolutely turned her thoughts to the memory of an advertisement she had read of cotton blouses to be had in the Brompton Road for 1s. 3¾d.; and in her pursuit of these miracles of bad taste, bad work, and sweating prices she managed to banish Kitty and Nibs very comfortably from her mind.



"'YOU'RE A RUDE, NAUGHTY, UNGRATEFUL LITTLE GUTTER BOY,' CRIED MISS HILES."

Meanwhile the children, sitting opposite each other in a third-class carriage, were perfectly happy. It was delightful to travel, it was delightful to be together, it was most delightful to be away from Miss Hiles.

They had on their best clothes, Kitty a

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clean white frock, Nibs a Jack Tar suit of duck. The blue collar of this, to be sure, was much faded in the laundry, while the lace on Kitty's skirt was badly torn in the goffering. And Nibs's sailor hat was greatly battered, for he sometimes used it as a pail in which to carry water and sometimes as a hod for gravel or stones; while Kitty's was sun-browned, and the once pink ribbon which trimmed it was no longer pink, but a yellowish white.

Then they possessed no gloves, and there were no buttons to Nibs's shoes, the straps of which flapped loose, and Kitty was constantly obliged to smooth down her frock over her knees to conceal a new hole in her already much-mended stocking.

At a casual glance you would never have taken them for the children of gentlefolks.

But the other passengers in the carriage, engrossed each in his own affairs, took no notice of them at all.

The train rushed out through the ugly South London suburbs until it reached the comparative beauty of Wimbledon and Surbiton. Here most of the passengers got out, and the children's carriage remained empty but for one preoccupied elderly man, and when the train stopped again at the next station but one he got out too.

Kitty and Nibs looked at each other inquiringly. Was this Hampton Court? It seemed as though it müst be, for the train stood quite still and no porter came along to bang the open doors.

"Let's get out," said Nibs, the venturesome.

Kitty, the prudent, leaned from the doorway and saw the other end of the platform quite black with people leaving the station and nobody at all getting into the train, while every carriage door stood wide open, from engine to guard's van.

Yes, this must be Hampton Court. So she sprang lightly off the step and Nibs scrambled after her, and the two little creatures walked up the platform hand in hand, Kitty always carefully holding the tickets. But where was "auntie"? No kind-faced lady like the lady in Kitty's portrait stood there to welcome them. The children looked about in vain.

Nibs wanted to follow the other people out of the station; he felt sure they would find her outside. But Kitty decided that they must wait for her where they were. So they waited patiently and without any fear, and presently discovered they were the only two passengers left. Everybody else had gone away. It began to be a little lonesome.

The collector who had been taking tickets at the exit now came towards them, counting those already collected over in his hand.

He spied the children.

"Did you come by this train, my dears?" said he.

Kitty handed him her tickets.

"Half-singles from Waterloo, eh? Did you come alone? And where are you going to now?"

"We're waiting for our auntie," said Kitty, in her neat, deliberate little voice, sounding the consonants very clearly and putting a tiny, dot-like pause between every word.

"All right! Sit here until she comes. But I'll say good-bye, for I'm off to my dinner. I hope auntie will be quick and not keep you waiting too long for yours."

He laughed heartily at this witticism and so did the children, and for another half-hour they continued very happy. They explored the waiting-rooms, examined the luggage waiting to go by the next train "up," looked at the open picture-papers hanging from a line over the bookstall, and for a long time watched some cattle packed into trucks on the other side of the permanent way. The poor things' pathetic eyes were turned wistfully from the interior of the whitewashed trucks to the green fields they would never tread again.

Nibs discovered he was hungry.

"I say, Kits, when do you think auntie'll come?"

"Just directly," Kitty thought. "You mustn't be so impatient, Nibs. She's got a long, long way to walk and heaps of things to do—to buy our dinners and, perhaps, some pretty toys for us, and to have our beds made and our room swept out, and oh! lots and lots of other things too!"

"What, you children here still?"

It was two o'clock and the ticket-collector had come back.

"Your auntie must have forgotten you, I'm thinking. Where does she live, eh?"

The children looked at each other and looked at the collector, but said nothing.

"What's her name?" he tried again.

"Her name is Auntie," said Kitty, with charming distinctness.

"Where do you come from?" asked the perplexed collector.

"From London, and from India before that," said Nibs, "and where before that I don't remember."

"But what is your address in London?"

The children did not know.

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Just then a train came in and the collector had to go to his post. The children watched the carriages disgorge their passengers, watched these hurry to the exit as if they were trying to catch a train instead of just leaving one, watched the crowd hanging black round the collector like bees round their queen; and then in a few moments more there was the station empty again of anyone but their two selves—two poor little selves beginning to feel very tired and disconsolate.

A porter came sauntering up.

"Halloa!" said he, from a little distance.

"Halloa!" responded Nibs.

"Wot you two kids doin' here?"

"Kid yourself!" cried Nibs aggressively.

"Wotser nime, your auntie?" asked the porter.

"Just what the blessed mites don't know, nor where she lives neither."

"Werjer come from? London? Then werjer live in London?" asked the porter, who was a cockney himself and sharp.

"We live with Miss Hiles," said Kitty.

"Yus. But wot street jer live in?"

"It's not a street," said Kitty; "it's a square."

"But it's got a nime. Belgrive Squire, Heaton Squire, Grosvenor Squire?" he interrogated, proud of his knowledge. But poor little Kitty did not know the name of Miss Hiles's square.

"Rum go," the porter opined. "Single



"'KID YOURSELF!' CRIED NIBS, AGGRESSIVELY."

The porter was much amused.

"We're waiting for auntie," explained the pacific Kitty.

"Yes, and they've been waiting for her ever since 12.45," said the collector, joining the porter.

tickets and no luggage? Looks fishy. Not the first time unnatcheral parients have tried to shove off their young 'uns this way neither. No, not by a long chalk. Why, when I wos at Gorsple Oak——"

"Stow it," said the collector; "here's

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the guv'nor coming, and we'd better tell him."

"The guv'nor" was the station-master, before whom the ticket-collector proceeded to lay the case.

Now, he was only really the station-master's substitute while the station-master himself was taking his holiday. And this substitute was a timid, rigid, unimaginative man. He was rather afraid of children, having none of his own, and he was intensely afraid of taking on himself any responsibility. He listened to the porter's "unnatcheral parients" theory, and he saw himself saddled for life with the two poor little things. But even this prospect did not appal him so much as did the prospect of his wife's anger if he should have the temerity to take them home. Such a thing was quite out of the question, and his face grew sour and his manner short as the difficulty of the position forced itself on his attention.

"What station did they come from?" he snapped.

"Waterloo, sir," said the friendly collector.

"Return tickets?"

"Single halves."

"Any money?"

"Have you any money, my dear?" asked the collector, of Kitty.

Poor Kitty, now completely frightened and disheartened, only shook her head.

"Disgraceful plant!" grumbled the deputy station-master. "People like that deserve the treadmill. Don't believe there's any aunt at all. However, they can sit here and give her the chance of turning up, and if she don't I'll send 'em up to Waterloo by the last train. Look out their tickets, Perkiss. We'll send the tickets up with 'em as a means of identification. Now then, look sharp, there's the 3.53 signalled."

A long and beautiful summer day was passing over the land. White, sharp-edged, sun-suffused clouds stood up like mountains in the blue sky and were reflected in the river flowing placidly between low banks. Boating parties were beginning to unpack their tea-baskets. The deep-toned, red-brick palace in its stately gardens breathed a note of romance and old-world story into the air. Within a stone's throw of the children hundreds of people were enjoying themselves: there was no one without some sort of a home, some sort of ties. Only the two poor, forlorn little creatures sat there on a bench in the dusty, ugly station, nobody's business, nobody's care, hungry, tired, and with all their bubbling gaiety at last quenched.

The ticket-collector went away to his tea,



"HAVE YOU ANY MONEY, MY DEAR?"

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and brought back with him a couple of buns. He gave them to the children, who had had nothing to eat since breakfast, but Nibs's little mouth was so parched with thirst he could not eat. The porter procured him some water in a tin mug.

Other trains came in and went out. There were moments of bustle and movement on the station, and then again long, long periods when there was nothing to distract the mind.

The cattle trucks were moved away to a distant siding.

The shadows stretched out slenderly, and the sun began to redden as it went down.

The children sat dozing, huddled up in a corner of the bench. Nibs's head was in Kitty's lap, and had anyone been concerned to examine Kitty's sweet little face he would have found that she had cried herself to sleep.

"The speshull's signalled!" shouted the porter to the ticket-collector; "she'll be coming in here on the right."

Nibs stirred himself up.

"I dreamded of ayah," he told Kitty. "She telled me I was her pukka Baba Sahib, just as she used to. I wish she was here. I wish we could take a train to India!"

"Here, kids!" cried the porter, "doncher wanter come an' see the black soldiers, eh? There's a lotter Injun troops camped here in the park for the Corynation, an' ter-day they've bin up in town enjying of theirselves at Madam Toosord's or sumweres."

The children roused themselves without enthusiasm, for they barely understood what he said; but they followed him politely to a distant platform, arriving just in time to see gliding up to it a very long train.

The doors flew open and Nibs thought he must be dreaming still.

For what were these tall, turbaned forms with silver crescents or iron circlets gleaming in the muslin's folds; with blue and scarlet and orange tunics; with black, curled beards and braided hair; with wholesome dark brown skins; what could they be but dream people connected with home and dad and India, with the far-away happy times and places where everyone was always kind to children, and he was ayah's pukka Baba Sahib?

He squeezed Kitty's hand convulsively.

"Look, look, Kits!" he cried, his little face on fire.

But the sedate and gentle Kitty was all pink with excitement, too.

For these wild-looking warriors, Jats and Sikhs and smooth-faced Pathans, these ugly, fierce-eyed, little Gurkhas with kookrie-knives slung at their waists, who all seemed to the gathering crowd of loafers so awe-inspiring and so strange, to Kitty seemed the most natural, the most familiar, the most beautiful sight in the world. With fixed and radiant eyes she watched the platform fill with glowing uniforms, and the ranks form up as the well-known word of command fell on her ear. She was back again in the mysterious East, or, rather, a rose from the mysterious East had suddenly blossomed out upon the humdrum, colourless station.

"March!" called out the officer; but at that same instant came a child's unrestrained cry of joy.

"Bhimi! Bhimi Dessah!"

Nibs had rushed forward and was embracing a big Sikh round the knees.

"Oh, Baba Sahib!"

The man squatted down on his heels so as to bring his face on a level with the child's.

"Where has the Baba Sahib been all this long time?" he asked, affectionately. "And how tall and pukka he has grown! And is this the Mem Missy?"

"Oh, Bhimi, will you please take care of us?" pleaded Kitty. "We're so unhappy and so hungry! And auntie has never come to meet us, and we've been here all day!"

Saluting, the tall Sikh turned to say a few words with his officer, and it ended in Bhimi receiving permission to bring the children into camp.

The procession of Indians which marched out of the station that day and over the bridge along the Barge Walk was curiously completed by a big Sikh who carried in his arms a chattering little English boy, and led a happy little English girl by the hand.

"It appears, sir," explained Captain Lawson, when he reached camp, to the commanding officer, "that Bhimi Dessah used to be in Captain Frere's regiment at Peshawur, and these children are the little Freres. Funny thing to have sent them down here by themselves to-day, whoever did it. Don't understand that part of it at all."

"Well, they can't stay in camp anyhow," said Major Chalmers. "But I'm going over to dine with Lady Ollard in the Palace, and I'll take them with me to ask her advice. She's an awfully good sort, and passionately fond of children. She'll understand what to do with them, I know. Let Bhimi and someone else be ready to carry them over in an hour's time. The poor mites must be tired to death."

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"'WHERE HAS THE BABA SAHIB BEEN ALL THIS LONG TIME?' HE ASKED, AFFECTIONATELY."

But, revived by pleasant Indian sweets and other camp cookery, Kitty and Nibs were lively as little bats when the time came to go, and danced and skipped by Bhimi's side as they traversed the camp, crossed a bit of the Home Park, entered the beautiful Palace gardens, and so into the Palace itself, and to Lady Ollard's rooms.

"Why, this *is* my auntie!" cried Kitty, to the kind-faced lady who came to greet Major Chalmers in the drawing-room.

"Who do you say, Major? The little Freres? Bob's children? Oh, darlings, darlings, how glad I am you have come!"

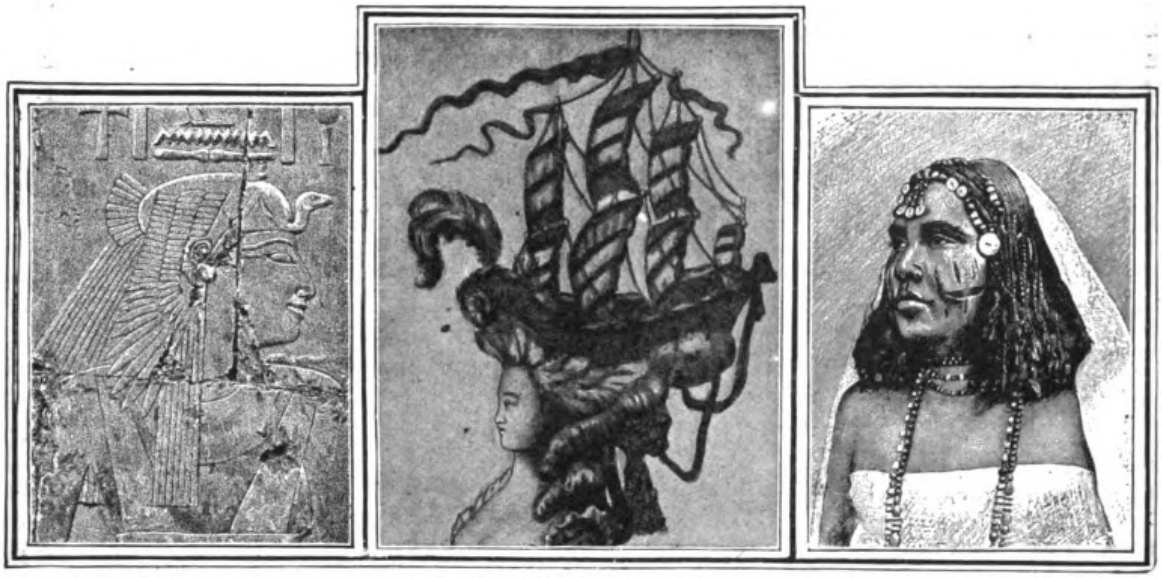
And while she covered them with kisses she told the Major, "My poor brother has been ill for weeks and weeks, and I only heard of it this morning for the first time. When he thought he was going to die his one desire was that I should take care of his children. Unfortunately, there had been something between us—but that's a sad old story now and must be forgotten. And now auntie is going to take care of her darlings, is she not?" said Lady Ollard, kissing the beaming little faces again and again.

"But Bhimi must ster—stay and take care of us, too?" said Nibs, very earnestly, and he always stuttered a little when very much in earnest. He put his tiny, fair hand on Bhimi's dark one and held him tight. "It will save you a good bit, auntie, for you see I'm very heavy to carry, and Bee—Bhimi will carry me to bed."

So for that evening, anyhow, Bhimi stayed.

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Martyrs of Fashion.



THREE IDEALS OF HEADDRESS.

TO take care of her person, to correct certain imperfections which disfigure a pretty face, to dress with taste, to obey the exigencies of fashion is, for a woman, not only a permissible coquetry, but almost a conventional duty. At the same time, if to that extent the art of the toilette is quite legitimate, as much cannot be said for the means taken by some women to give themselves the appearance of a beauty denied to them by Nature. To what learned, complicated, and strange recipes they have recourse, to what sufferings they subject themselves light-heartedly, is hardly believable; and beyond question the price paid is a very heavy one for the acquisition of a fictitious beauty—which deceives nobody.

Is it not the dream of almost all women to be beautiful and to remain young? And who thinks of reproaching them for it? What moralist would be so severe as to blame them? To take particular care of her toilette, to select what adornments may assist in giving an agreeable expression to her visage, and to correct whatever faults it may have—nothing is less blamable, nothing is more natural; only the question here is one of extent, a matter of degree. By the side of this wholly allowable coquetry there is another, at which we cannot refrain from smiling, unless we are inclined to feel pity for those who are under its influence: it consists in the complete substitution of artifice for Nature in carrying out a labour of vanity and falsehood which, when all is done, misses its end, since the effect it produces is of the most repugnant kind.

To fashion or cultivate her beauty, then, becomes an art in which all the arts are employed, a science to which all the sciences lend their aid—in which chemistry and medicine, surgery and painting, physics, statuary, and mineralogy all have parts to play.

But it is not only time, trouble, and money that have to be paid in such a case; patience, resignation, and endurance are also demanded. Who is there who does not know the sufferings to which some women will condemn themselves, duped by a mirage of beauty? Who does not know to what lengths they will carry the cruelties of self-martyrdom? Let us call up this spectacle, let us look upon this self-inflicted torture of coquetry pushed to mania, and see how much strength of will may be put at the service of frivolity.

The first merit which calls admiring attention to a woman, and has at all times been celebrated by the poets, is freshness of complexion. The women of Corinth took a bath of perfumed olive oil for two hours daily. In Rome the vapour-bath, followed by douches and massage, occupied the mornings of elegant ladies. Nero's wife, the Empress Poppæa, invented baths of asses' milk, in which she indulged twice a day. Flocks of several hundred asses followed the Court wherever it went, to insure the toilette of the Empress.

Under the Directory Madame Tallien tried baths of crushed strawberries and raspberries. But what is the sort of bath that has not

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been contrived? Baths of grape and olive skins, of Bordeaux wine, and of champagne have been used. A French doctor recommended baths of fresh blood, and in hundreds of towns bathing-places were provided in the public slaughter-houses. Other votaries of fashion were advised to bury themselves inside the bodies of dead animals, and even in manure-heaps. Modern science has replaced these strange prescriptions by baths of glycerine, and by ammoniacal, electric, and chemical baths.

But even those revolting expedients for giving a beautiful hue to the skin were, perhaps, less matters of torture than the wearing through the night of masks, sometimes rigid, sometimes repulsive. In Rome the usage of the mask was so general that it was called the domestic, or husband's, mask. It was fabricated by special slaves every evening, with a paste made of bean flour, or with a mucilaginous product found in the nests of certain sea-birds; or, again, with the sweat of lambs.

In France the domestic mask was in use down to the seventeenth century. We owe to Henry III., who wore it, the recipe for a mask made of flour and white of eggs. This composition hardened on the face during the night, and was softened in the morning with a lotion of chervil. Haricot bean flour, fresh cream, honey, and olive oil entered into the preparation of these masks, which moulded themselves to the features. The chroniclers have left many ironical descriptions of these "stone faces," in which the features of these "elegants" were encased at nightfall, to be broken on the return of daylight and give to view—at least for a few hours—a complexion intact and youthful.

Let us not, however, too strongly accuse of fantasies the "elegants" of other days, with their "stone faces." In the dressing-room of some voluntary victim of coquetry in 1902, what are those freshly-cut and carefully-secreted beefsteaks, lividly raw and red, with powder-boxes near them? Presently, with much of mystery, those steaks will be adjusted with minute care by a lady's-maid to the cheeks of her mistress, held in their places with a bandage, and not removed before the next morning. This energetic recipe is said to be a more effective refresher of the complexion than chemical baths or "beauty pills" poisoned with arsenic; at any rate, the application of it demands courage, mystery, and discretion.

But, defiant of masks, fleshly compresses, and arsenical potions, little deformations will show themselves: tiny indiscreet folds of the skin at the corners of the mouth; the epidermis shrinks about the eyes; the surface of the forehead loses its smoothness; the first wrinkle threatens to assert itself. Treatment at once energetic and immediate is called for. Quickly a veritable arsenal is laid under contribution to eradicate this minim of defect. Behold a series of instruments of hardwood and metal, that look like models of garden implements! They are all for use in the processes of "face massage." For one or two hours daily for weeks—it may be for months—a practitioner employs these tools upon the face of his patient with minute care. Each one of the muscles that may act upon the unfortunate pucker in the skin must be massaged in accordance with the importance of the part it plays. Frictions of alcohol and the application of wet bandages terminate each operation. The wrinkle got rid of, partial masks maintain the smoothness of the epidermis so laboriously obtained, until renewed massage becomes requisite a little later on.

The electric treatment is more delicate still: it demands the application of a continuous or intermittent current to the extremities of each of the muscles to be fortified. Five or six electrodes may be applied simultaneously to a face that is becoming wrinkled. The intensity of the currents being very weak, innumerable *séances* are necessary; and, even if not made painful, the operation is, at least, a very tedious one. Add to this that it has to be accompanied by interior medication—that the patient must be fattened or made thinner, according to the state of the epidermis. The suppression of a wrinkle, therefore, may represent three months of assiduous care, of two hours a day, by mechanical or electrical treatment.

So far, only the preservation intact of Nature's work has been dealt with; now we come upon something more difficult—the remedying of some of its errors, their curtailment or total elimination. Numerous stories have been told to us of savages scalping their prisoners, of their putting them to death at slow fires; it is to similar tortures a woman will unhesitatingly submit herself who has made the distressing discovery that her upper lip is developing a moustache, or is shadowed by a too positive growth of down, or that her cheeks are being invaded by a hairy excrescence. Depilatory operations are always painful—often dangerous.

The Egyptians, Greeks, and Romans had

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for this disagreeable growth on the visage the same aversion as ourselves: they tore out both down and hair by very energetic means, extirpating them either with tweezers or by placing on the spot a plaster composed of pitch and quicklime. All the so-called "depilatory" preparations have a caustic base, like the *rusma* of the Orientals, and burn and injure the skin to a certain depth.

Modern operators practise extraction also. An extremely fine point of hard wood is dipped in crystallizable acetic acid, then applied to the skin beside the hair to be destroyed, which is gently drawn by tweezers. Several applications are made, at intervals of a few minutes; the skin softens, and the point penetrates. The skin then gives way to the least strain put upon it. Whatever the skill of the artist may be, however, the operation is a most painful one—so painful that the extraction of five or six hairs at a sitting is as much as a patient can endure.

Electricity may here be introduced. Into the hair itself is inserted a needle of nickelled platinum, through which a conductor causes a current of 4,000 or 5,000 ampères to circulate for a variable period. Scars often result from this energetic mode of treatment. Besides which, the caprice of electricity, which has its irony, has to be counted with; it may happen that, though it destroys the hair itself, it strengthens the root from which it has sprung and causes a growth of new down, finer and more abundant than ever. The red-hot iron is always the supreme resource—and the supreme torture.

This light down was a mere suspicion—a mere shadow; but imagine that a pimple may appear on this epidermis, or perhaps a wart, or streaks and patches of red spread over it! And remember that it is the finest skins that are most exposed to misadventures of that sort! Let surgery come to our assistance; let it cut, slash, tear, and uproot. With a silken thread it strangles excrescences—burns them with acids, or tears away by fragments stains of the skin. This very delicate operation goes on for weeks. Josephine Beauharnais had the patience to allow sixty freckles to be removed from her face with the aid of the knife.



IN THE ROOMS OF A PARISIAN "BEAUTIFIER."
From a Photo. by Baulez.

But all these operations appear pale and commonplace by the side of the heroism displayed two years ago by a celebrated actress, to whom truly belongs the martyr's crown. Driven to desperation by seeing her beauty compromised by a series of superficial alterations in her complexion, she decided to have the skin of her face completely changed! She found doctors who undertook the performance of this strange operation, which extended over seven weeks—seven weeks of uninterrupted suffering. All the skin of her face was chemically burned, then detached bit by bit. At the end of two months of suffering the old epidermis had entirely disappeared and been replaced by a skin as rosy, thin, and tender as that of a new-born child! So disconcerting was the aspect of this baby-like complexion to a woman of thirty that the desperate actress found herself more ill-looking after the operation than she had thought herself to be before undergoing it,

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and had to seclude herself for a month to allow her new skin to age a little. At the end of four months, however, the result was perfect; the best friends of the heroic actress all declaring that she was "unrecognisable," so completely was she rejuvenated and transformed!

We have suppressed undesirable hairs, blotches, and warts: let us now add to them! We have been at much pains to do all this; and we will now do as much in an opposite direction.

It was in the seventeenth century that the use of "patches" was inaugurated. They were cut out of thin black silk or sarcenet, gummed on the back, in the forms of crescents, suns, stars, and comets. They resembled on a face the signs of the Zodiac. They were an indispensable accessory to the play of the features. The placing of them on the temples, near the eyes, and at the corners of the mouth was a special art. A woman of quality always wore from eight to ten, and never went out without her box of patches for the replacing of those that fell off, or for the addition of fresh ones, as occasion might require.



A LADY OF FASHION OF THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY APPLYING HER "PATCHES." *From an* [*Old Print.*

Each one of these patches had a characteristic name: at the corner of the eye, "the impassioned"; in the middle of the cheek, "the gallant"; near the lips, "the coquette"; on a pimple, "the concealer." When she had these all properly placed, a fashionable lady looked as if she had met with some accident to her skin. Even to-day we see ladies who have had little pieces of brown india-rubber inserted under their skin to imitate moles or "beauty-spots."

That is only the beginning. We are now going to witness the whole work of ornamenting a face, of which there is not a feature that cannot be learnedly modified. First, the eye. In antiquity the art of enlarging and darkening the pupil was already known. Ovid says: "The surroundings of the eyes should be slightly darkened, a fine powder blown under the lids to make them appear brilliant and larger, the eyelashes tinted with sepia, the arc of the eyebrows lengthened."

To-day the transformation is not merely superficial. By the absorption of certain poisonous substances—atropine and belladonna, amongst others — a dilation of the pupil is obtained, making it look more expressive and luminous. Around the eye so enlarged some skilful touches with a pencil, prolonging the external opening of the lids; and the application of a flesh-paint, the basis of which is lamp-black, to the lashes, will give a look of brightness to the eyes. Besides all this there needs, for enframing these perfected eyes, well-designed eyebrows and thick lashes. Partial extirpation of the hair of the brows and repeated massages may serve to modify their curve.

At the Court of Peter the Great the Russian women of fashion adopted a radical means, that of having their eyebrows entirely extracted, substituting for them a thick layer of black-lead, perfectly designed. Sometimes artificial eyelashes, slightly moistened with collodion, are placed under the natural lashes, which they enlarge. Of course, this work of art must be minutely renewed every day; the effect of belladonna is only momentary; paints become dimmed, and the false eyelids are never of a solidity to be altogether trustworthy.

The face is now to become a veritable palette, on which are all the tones of white,

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of blue, and of red, to simulate a young and brilliant complexion.

White, called silver or pearl-white, furnishes the first coat and groundwork of the picture. Is it generally known that the elementary essential of all whites is alabaster, pounded and pulverized in special mills mostly installed at Paris? Our "elegants" exhaust every year a quarry of fine marble for the making-up of their faces. The white is spread with a pad of cotton-wool or soft brush, more thickly on the parts where there are wrinkles, or where they may be threatening to appear. The red, chosen from among seventeen shades between rose and vermilion, is laid on lightly in layers and graduated from the top of the cheeks to the beginning of the neck. Finally, with pastels made of powdered talc and indigo, the artist traces in simple lines the course of the veins. One may suppose that the picture is then finished. But what varieties and subtleties enter into this making-up! A visage intended to shine under the rays of powerful lights cannot be treated in the same way as one intended to be seen in the light of day: there is a red for the evening, a red for the theatre, and another for the town, for the country, for the sea! There is one make-up for fêtes and another for simple entertainments!



AN UP-TO-DATE PROCESS—MODELLING THE EYEBROWS BY MEANS OF THE ELECTRIC NEEDLE.
From a Photo. [*by Baulez.*

Even painting has for some years given place to a process highly mysterious and jealously secreted by its practisers: that of enamelling. It substitutes for the outfit of paints a small solid envelope, transparent and coloured, which covers the face with a coat of enamel. While the most successful make-up of paint cannot long resist exposure to heat, and must be renewed at least once a day, enamel lends the face a brightness that may endure for several weeks. Its inconvenience is the ceramic stiffness, the immobility in which it holds all the features while giving them a brilliant appearance. Its application, moreover, is a long and painful operation. To fix, cold, upon the skin the colouring powers, recourse must be had to acids of a dangerous character. Part of the enamelling must be done in darkness, and two or three days of interrupted treatment are indispensable for rendering the application definitive.

Grave accidents, chronic affections of the skin, often result from enamelling that has been too energetically performed. But the very risk seems to add temptation to this mysterious operation; and who would not brave it to obtain the pearly splendour which turns the visage into a piece of art pottery? Scraped, massaged, polished, electrified, a halo of blue about the large and flashing eyes, the whole face brilliant, this work of art has now to be crowned with a harmoniously-adapted head of hair.

At times when fashion requires that its followers shall have hair of a dark blonde or mahogany colour, what is to be done with black hair but dye it? And what can be done with a thin or failing crop of hair but strengthen it by useful additions, enrich and thicken it?

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IN THE TIMES OF POWDERED HAIR—PROTECTING THE FACE WITH A PAPER CONE WHILE THE HAIRDRESSER APPLIES THE POWDER. *From an Old Print.*

The Orientals and Egyptians, preferring black hair, obtain it by the use of a lotion composed of Indian ink and rose-water. The young Jewesses used gold-dust to brighten their hair, and it is from them came the fashion of powdered hair. In Rome the "elegants" used dyes of gold colour, greens, and blues. Some of their recipes were very strange. There was one in which the juice of hellebore was mixed with honey and pounded rats' heads. In old France simple powder was at first sufficient; under Charles IX. it was violet, red under Louis XIII. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries white only was used. Mercier, in 1783, protested against the frightful quantity of starch which this fashion caused to be consumed, affirming that cities like London and Paris swallowed up as much meal daily as would have sufficed for the nourishment of ten thousand hungry people.

Modern chemistry lends itself to the most fantastic variations. Who knows what part chance may play in scientific discoveries? It is not less so in regard to capillary art. A doctor visiting a potash manufactory noticed the admirable golden hues of the hair of all the workwomen. A dye with a potash base was immediately combined, producing the Venetian blonde so greatly in vogue of late years. The same effect was formerly attained by exposing the hair to the sun, as shown in the following illustration from an old print. By accident also was the discovery made that the first greying of chestnut hair may be stayed by a lotion of tea. All grades of colour, from black to blonde, are obtained from preparations more or less dangerous, the least peril incurred being the weakening of the growth of hair and the provocation of premature baldness.

The most beautiful heads of natural hair do not equal certain marvellous wigs. In all times women have occasionally worn wigs. "Let us picture to ourselves," wrote M. de Saporta, "Mary Stuart on the scaffold: the executioner raises his axe, decapitates the poor Queen, and, seizing by its long hair the head dripping with blood, cries with all his might: 'God save Queen



TURNING THE HAIR "VENETIAN BLONDE," BY SPREADING IT TO THE SUN OVER A BROAD BRIM WITHOUT A CROWN. *From an Old Print.*

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Elizabeth!' But the distresses of all kinds endured by Mary had stripped her of the blonde tresses of which she had once been so proud: the executioner grasped nothing but a wig, while the head, denuded of its covering, fell noisily on to the floor of the scaffold. For the rest, the Queen of England's head was no better furnished than that of her victim, and her red wig is not less famous."

The eighteenth century must be reached to find that the art of wig-making has attained the highest pitch of perfection—and ridiculousness. Then appeared the head-dresses called "opera-boxes," which increased the height of a woman's face to 72in. from the bottom of her chin to the top of her piled-up hair; or those, more extravagant still, called puffs, in which the hair was raised stage above stage, stretched upon frames. In 1774 the Duchesse de Chartres appeared at the opera, her head dressed with a pyramidal puff on which were seen the Duc de Beaujolais, her eldest son, in the arms of his nurse, a parrot pecking at a cherry, a little negro, and ciphers made of hairs, even of the Duc de Chartres and of Princes.



ONE OF THE LATEST METHODS—REMOVING WRINKLES BY MEANS OF THE ELECTRIC ROLLERS.
From a Photo. [*by Baulez.*

Though less exacting, our present fashions demand an abundance of hair which has been discreetly augmented by fictitious additions. France alone consumes yearly more than 400,000lb. weight of hair in the making of some 30,000,000 wigs. It is the most costly of artificial beauties, for it has first to be purchased, then kept in order by being dressed daily by the aid of a multitude of products and numerous auxiliaries. The outlay on certain elegant heads of hair would serve to maintain fifteen persons—bald or not.

Now we come to the mouth. On the lips is placed a freshening pigment; on the gums a special rose. The tongue is scraped and rubbed with soft velvet. The teeth are ornamented and fabricated at will. The Annamite women carefully cover their teeth with a salve composed of bone-charcoal, sawdust, and honey; this is an elegance among savages. How much more civilized appears to us the recent fashion of rich American ladies, who, in cavities cut or filed in the hollows of their teeth, set rubies, pearls, diamonds, so that a sparkle underlines every smile of their opened lips?

It is now the turn of the ear-modeller. The practice of moulding the ears, which has again become fashionable, is a very old one: the improved shape is effected by training the outer shell of the ear by binding it over pieces of wood of different forms; a cunning ointment is laid over all, and even the least æsthetic ears do not resist this treatment.

And now we come to the nose-maker. Nothing is rarer than a well made nose; and need it be said of what importance the nose is? To-day noses are remade, refashioned, augmented, the curve of them changed at pleasure. Electric massage, the introduction of cylindrical and expanding sponges into the nostrils, are powerless to effect this prodigy; to achieve it, the skin must be moulded from beneath. The form of the nose chosen, Greek or aquiline, straight or upturned, is carefully moulded in plaster of Paris, with exact dimensions; of this a plaster mould is applied to the nose to be

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transformed, at the base of which, beneath the skin, a fine syringe charged with pure vaseline is introduced. The process of injection is then carried out, the vaseline penetrates under the skin, which it raises and presses closely against the mould; the pressure on the syringe is maintained until the vaseline injected becomes firm. The mould is then removed, and the nose, recently depressed and ill-shapen, exactly resembles the model, only a little discoloured. A trifling daub of red, with some blue veins pencilled, completes this veritable creation, this triumph of modern cosmetics.

Perhaps you may now declare yourself satisfied with your face. It has cost you quite enough. But, no! Beauty is a matter of proportions. All is lost if you are too big or too little, if you have feet too long, hands too short, a neck too long, a figure too heavy or too thin. What then? You are too tall; your height must be lessened. Your limbs are too long; very well, they must be shortened; too short, they must be lengthened. Let us resign ourselves again heroically to the torture, therefore: an inch has to be taken from the length of our neck, or as much added to it.

To accomplish this there are infallible means. How many processes are there for reducing fat, from the endless band in which women of middle age are swathed to the modern electric corset furnished with invisible batteries! Your limbs are too short? Swedish gymnastics will lengthen and stretch them, by means of apparatus very much resembling some ancient instruments of punishment. The size of a hand cannot be much diminished, but by repeated massages its heavy form may be modified, its fingers better arranged, and their nails freed from flesh. These are objects of great care and energetic treatment. When an ill-formed or ill-placed nail resists the action of polishers and artificial enamel, some "elegants" do not hesitate to submit to have it wholly removed by the burning of its base with acid; the new nail is then, from its birth, treated with infinite care. An actress in London with rare courage is reported to have had the nails on both hands replaced in this way. In Paris alone more than 3,000 specialists are engaged in the fabrication and preservation of beautiful hands.

Is that the end? Not yet. The idea of leaving motion, gesture, attitude, to chance! One must learn to walk, to smile, to execute the least gesture according to a harmonious rhythm. The commonest gesture is taught and repeated that is calculated to increase the effect of the least acquired grace. In fine, when nothing of Nature has been left, the pupil has acquired the full mastery; the work is complete.

And that work is, veritably, the creation of a new being, artificial and elegant, in whom nothing remains, or at least is visible, of the imperfections imposed by Nature. But are these artificial *chefs d'œuvre* worth as much as the sincere and imperfect work of Nature? Painted and enamelled, tinted and moulded to admiration, the heroines of coquetry may at least reproach themselves with having been too successful. They have committed the fault of passing the boundary at which care of the person ceases to be justifiable, and are after all much less attractive than a healthy milkmaid.



ELECTRICITY AS THE NEWEST CURE FOR BALDNESS.
From a Photo. by Baulez.

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MY OLD BIKES.

BY LEONARD LARKIN.



IN my old bicycling days—when I was a young man—every bicyclist was an enthusiast. Nobody but an enthusiast could have endured it for a week. When I say we were all enthusiasts, I mean that is what we called ourselves; other people called us maniacs. And in fact, when I look back upon the troubles and flounderings and hard work on hard saddles and hard roads—oh, so hard sometimes!—of those days, I feel a growing tolerance for the opinion of those other people. Still, I can scarcely go so far as to call myself a maniac outright. Let us compromise: call me an enthusiac.

My first enthusiasm battered me against, and under, and all round a wooden "boneshaker." I suppose there must be many people alive now who have never even seen a boneshaker. It is not a very beautiful thing to see, but it is worse to feel; it is so uncompromising, so hard, and so full of metallic corners, and so emphatic in its way of impressing itself on you. The worst position in which to feel a boneshaker is between the boneshaker and a macadam road with your leg—but, there, let me first describe my own original boneshaker.

It was an assertive vehicle—a boneshaker that wouldn't be ignored. Its hue was the hue of mustard, picked out with crimson lines. It was so brilliant as to be positively painful to anybody without blue spectacles, and it was about as silent as a tinker's cart. It was about as heavy as that, too, and my progress along the street—when I succeeded in making any—aroused public attention like a runaway Lord Mayor's Show. The wheels possessed an extraordinary property of bumping and jumping and banging on the very smoothest surface—even on a polished floor—for no apparent cause; just as though half-a-dozen bricks had been lashed at intervals round the rim of each wheel. To ride this amazing engine one sat on a stuffed saddle of no particular shape, such shape as it had being produced by the eccentricities of the stuffing, which I suspect to have been geological in character. The handle-bar was some distance in front, at about the level of the chin, so that it would have been just possible to look over it at things ahead if one could have spared any attention from more immediate troubles. The pedals were well in front, too, and one's knees rose a good deal higher than one's waist at the top of each revolution; and on the front fork grew an elegant pair of iron brackets on which to hang up your legs when not required, going downhill. When the whole equipage turned round and assaulted me—it often did that—those elegant leg-hooks had a way of nipping my leg with deadly precision against the backbone, in such a way as made it impossible to move without imminent risk of breaking the limb. In these absorbing circumstances I was wont to lie sprawling on the Queen's highway and appeal for rescue to the scoffing pedestrian. The scoffing pedes-

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trian was not always there to be appealed to, however; in that case it was my privilege to repose in the mud with an agonized leg pinned fast, and throbbing with extra pangs whenever I moved a finger, till the prayed-for scoffer chanced along. At those times the blissful solitude of a country lane had its disadvantages. And, moreover, the scoffers were clumsy. Nine times out of ten they laid hold of the wrong part of the heap and made things worse; and after all the practice I gave them, too.

My next bike—at the time they usually called them velocipedes—was a "Phantom." This was an improved boneshaker. In place of the iron tyre a strip of rubber was nailed round the wheel, the spokes were wire, looped in staples, and there was a weird and startling arrangement of iron rods hinged to couple the two wheels, so that *both* steered together. That is to say, when I swung the front wheel to the right, the couplings slewed round the back wheel toward the left, and made the turn precisely twice as sudden as I had expected. Sometimes I only ran into the kerb, but usually I sat briskly on the road and contemplated a distant pile of Phantom. That was when I was lucky; at the unlucky corners the ghostly conveyance seized my leg exactly in the manner of my old boneshaker, except that it was provided with additional weapons of entanglement in the connecting rods. These and the leg-rests between them fixed me up so effectually that it was commonly necessary to assemble two scoffing pedestrians and a rejoicing boy to analyze the mixture; so that the Phantom's superiority over the plain boneshaker was demonstrated arithmetically as something like 2½ to 1. These little exhibitions, as a rule, brought about sudden alterations in the design of the bicycle, the commonest being the bending of the connecting rods. The result of this was that the thing would no longer steer at all except in a succession of eccentric circles and parabolas such as no comet ever performed without breaking its tail in the middle; and the entire turn-out became useless, except as the nearest available means of suicide. The india-rubber tyre was a great improvement, too. Nobody understands what a difference the rubber tyre made who did not come straight from the boneshaker to the Phantom, as I did. We enthusiacs, deafened and shaken loose at the joints with the thunderous rattle and clatter of the iron wheel, hailed it with joy. Many respectable persons, who until that time had regularly occupied the centre of country roads for the practice of somnambulism, were less delighted with the comparative silence of our approach, and chastised us with umbrellas. Even the umbrellas were bigger and heavier in those spacious times.

The Phantom gave way to the first of a series of tall, or "ordinary" (not at all ordinary nowadays), bicycles. They were not so very tall at first, however; we did things by degrees when I was an enthusiac. There was a long dispute between the enthusiacs who maintained that both wheels should be of the same size, and the others who were prepared to shed their blood—and did it, too, in many a complicated cropper—in defence of the eternal principle that the



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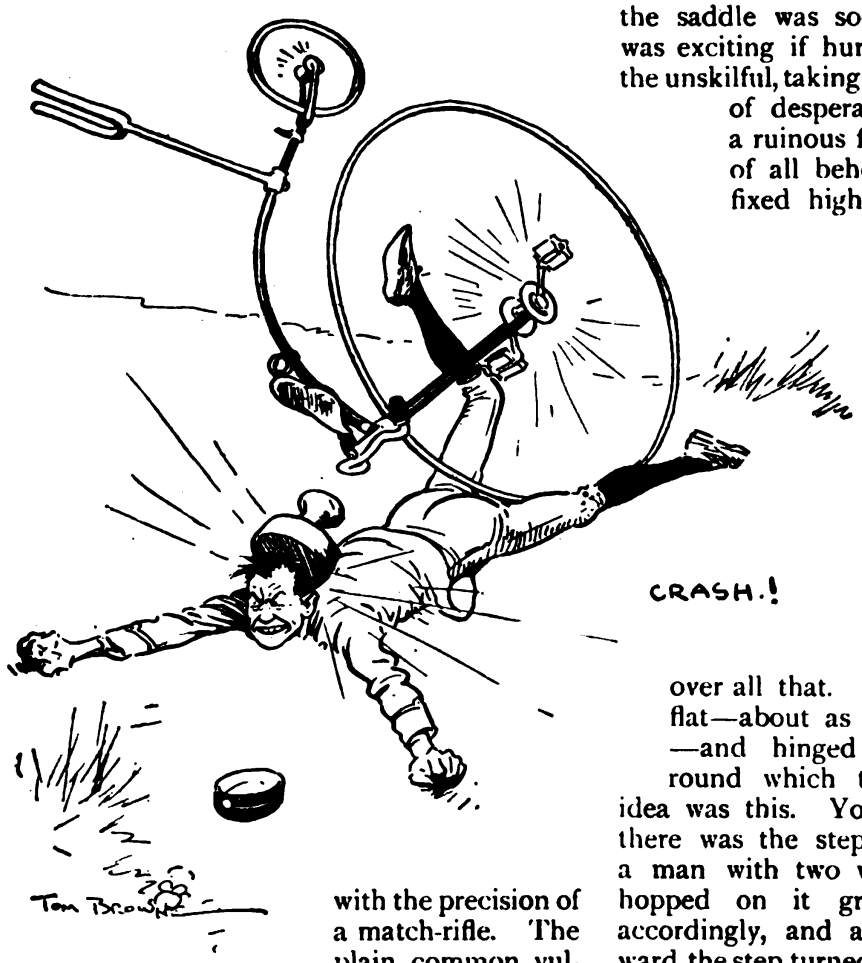
front wheel should be big and the back wheel small. Slowly—in virtue of superior recklessness, perhaps—the latter prevailed. The front wheels rose an inch at a time and the back wheels sank; and some philanthropist took away the connecting rods of the Phantom and buried them decently.

Now, as the front wheel grew and the back wheel shrank, the saddle got closer and closer to the head of the machine and more directly over the centre of the front wheel; and so the tendency arose to a bounding light-heartedness on the part of the hinder half of the affair, and a reverse tendency on the part of the big wheel, which acquired a habit of stopping suddenly to consider before surmounting a pebble or like obstruction in the road, while the little wheel soared merrily in the air behind, and the enthusiac passed on in front all by himself, till the sudden application of his countenance to the surface of the thoroughfare called his attention to his separation from his bicycle and the elevation of his heels. This process, being, unlike some others, much easier to perform than to describe at length, was shortly entitled a cropper, a howler, a mucker, a buster, or a purler.

This constant recurrence of the "cropper" was the main trouble with the tall bicycle, and many weird inventions were devised for its abolition. The common effect of these inventions was to multiply the croppers by about six, and as the plain bicycle, with no patent safety attachments, already made a pretty general average of a cropper in twenty miles for a good rider, the patent safety improvements were a trifle too exciting to be commercially successful. The amazing ease with which a cropper was accomplished with the tall bicycle cannot be realized by the rider of the modern machine, which won't throw you over even if you try to make it. You were perched, remember, on the exact top of a wheel about 5ft. high, with an inconsiderable little roller of a trailing wheel to weigh down behind, and nothing whatever to hold you up in front. The smallest check or jolt to the big wheel upset the balance of the whole arrangement, and then you were flung forward with your face to the ground, hammer-fashion, and a nice, straight iron handle-bar close across your waist to imprison your legs, and make quite certain that it should be your face, and no less tender spot, that first reached the surface of this unyielding planet. So that the incautious enthusiac who rode against a stone, or a walnut-shell, or a dead leaf, or a shadow, or anything else, ran a good chance of obliterated features. But we enthusiacs didn't mind—or, at least, we said we didn't. These little scrambles were half the fun, we used to say; though I cannot distinctly remember anybody taking up the sport solely for the sake of the croppers.

Many of the sanguine inventors who set out to conquer the cropper aimed at restraining the soaring ambition of the back wheel. Some of the earliest tried with a weight. Ah, me! how well I remember—especially in frosty weather—a tall bicycle I had fitted with an infallible cropper-preventer of this sort! An iron rod reached out backward over the back wheel and ended a good way behind in a prong like a tuning-fork. A massive chunk of lead was so made as to slide on or off this pronged end, and you could graduate your degree of safety by the use of bigger or smaller chunks of lead. The idea was, of course, that this weight, so far behind, would have so great a leverage as to hold down all that bucking, jumping framework with the back wheel, so that the big wheel might stop to consider about surmounting a brick without turning out the enthusiac over its head like coals from a sack. It was a capital idea, and looked charming, not only on paper, but on the machine; it never left off looking charming, in fact, till you tried it. Then you found that, although the arrangement was heavy enough and effectual enough to be a sad drag on the travelling, some amazing operation of Nature made it no hindrance to croppers whatever—almost an encouragement, in fact. What actually happened was this: you hit your stone, or your feather, or shadow, or whatever it might happen to be, and signified the same in the usual manner by coming the customary howler. The whole terrestrial cosmogony heaved up and hit you all over the face, and amid the wreck of matter and the crash of worlds you realized that you were *down*. With this sensation the common or roadside cropper of the unimproved bicycle ended; but in this perfected non-buster machine the finisher was to come. You felt that you were *down*, and the worst was done, whatever it was. And then, in that instant of time—*crash!* The chunk of lead took you in the back of the head like a cannon-ball, and knocked out the rest of your brains. For indeed that long rod with the prong acted as a catapult of marvellous accuracy, and as the machine turned its somersault it fired the chunk of lead at your occiput

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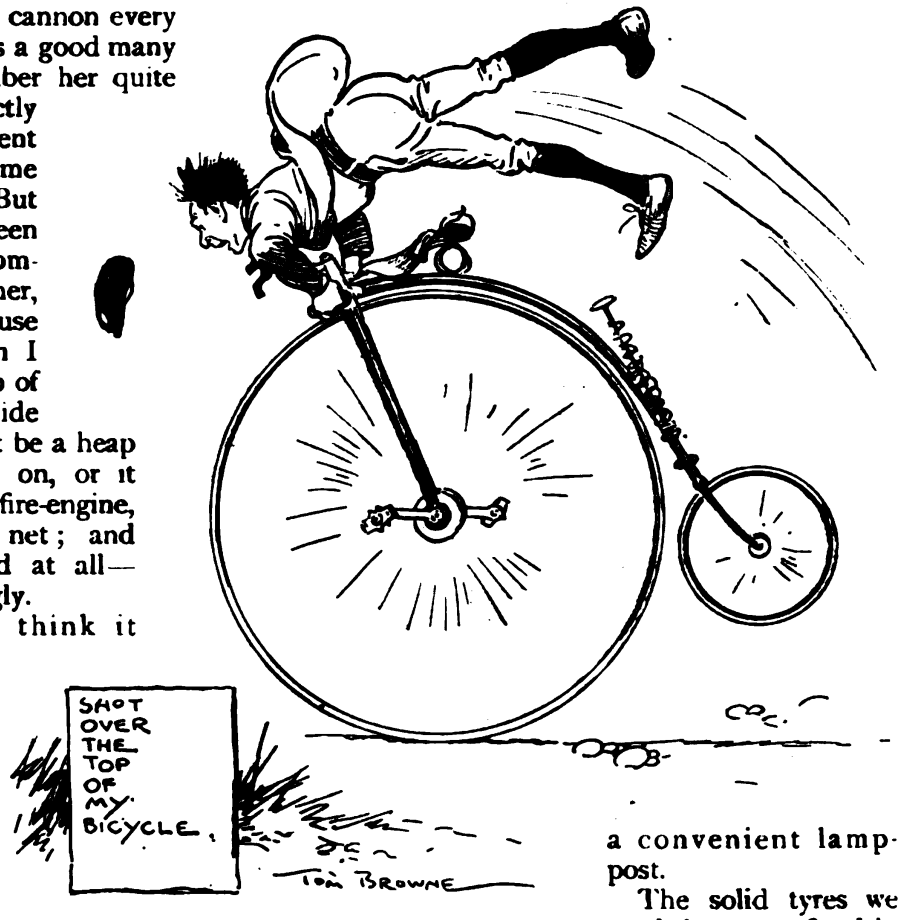


with the precision of a match-rifle. The plain, common, vulgar, dangerous, tall bicycle pitched you over, and, perhaps, jumped on you when you were down; the improved, non-croppering vehicle not only threw you down and jumped on you, but finished you off Goliath fashion with the guaranteed safety attachment; and the more safety you had purchased, with the greater expenditure of lead, the more completely your skull was shattered. On the whole, I was disappointed with this improvement. I avoided all warranted infallible unpurlable bicycles for some time, and took my croppers plain.

I went in for other improvements, however, and one of them was a patent spring step. A flash of memory tells me that the inventor's name was Dedicoat—a most ingenious gentleman who devised quite a number of clever things. But I think the spring step was his masterpiece. I tried two of them. You must know that one of the more interesting awkwardnesses of the tall bicycle was the trouble of mounting. You had to get the procession moving first, and then swarm up the backbone into the saddle and catch the pedals before the thing lost steerage-way. Uphill, in sticky mud, and particularly when the saddle was sodden with rain, this feat was exciting if hurried; and the struggles of the unskilful, taking the form of fifty yards or so of desperate hops, punctuated with a ruinous flounder, were the derision of all beholders. If your step were fixed high you couldn't get on it from the ground except at an appalling peril of burst raiment (we wore them tight in those days). And if it were low enough to step on easily, when you were there you were confronted with the task of scrambling into a saddle about on a level with your chin, with a greater risk of split costume than ever. Now the spring step was to get over all that. The step was round and flat—about as big, say, as a half-crown—and hinged to the top of a rod round which the spring coiled. The idea was this. You took your bicycle, and there was the step, so low and handy that a man with two wooden legs might have hopped on it gracefully. You hopped accordingly, and as your weight came forward the step turned on its hinge and released the spring, and, presto! you were gently wafted upward into the saddle. Charming! And then, of course, the step remained high and handy again, and when you wished to dismount you just put your foot back on it and it just as obligingly eased you down till it automatically caught fast again, and you stepped easily off, the pride and envy of the populace. Delightful! And it worked, too—yes, I can assure you that it worked. It worked exactly as the inventor intended, so long as the spring was tempered precisely—to a quarter of an ounce—to the rider's weight, and so long as the rider's weight remained the same. *But*, if the spring chanced to be a trifle too strong or too weak, or if you lent the machine to a friend, or sold it, or if you took an extra potato at lunch, or carried a toothpick with you, or wore a thinner pair of gloves, or had your hair cut, or did anything else to vary your weight, then—well, then it worked, too, but it worked differently. Suppose you were a shade too light for the spring. You hopped airily on the step, you bent gracefully forward till the spring was released, and then—*bang!* Do you remember "Zazel," the lady who was

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fired head first out of a cannon every night at the music-halls a good many years ago? I remember her quite well, and I know exactly how she felt; the patent spring step treated me just like that, often. But I would rather have been Zazel. She had a comfortable net to catch her, and roars of applause every time; but when I was shot over the top of my bicycle into the wide world beyond, it might be a heap of clinkers I alighted on, or it might be a passing fire-engine, but it was never a net; and people didn't applaud at all—they laughed unfeelingly.



But perhaps you think it wouldn't be quite so bad for a rider a little too *heavy* for the spring. Wouldn't it, though? I can tell you about that, too, for I tried a weaker spring after about twenty purely honorary appearances in the character of Zazel. On the weaker spring your graceful hop had, at first, no effect whatever. The hinge released the spring, but that was all; the step remained where it was, and the saddle remained where *it* was—too near the wrong end of you. So you sprang off the step and made a scramble for it; and with that—*bang!* The moment your weight was off the step it shot up and hacked out a large piece of ankle, or, perchance, ploughed two long, dangling strips, one out of your stocking and the other out of your calf. It was worse than Zazelling. And it was not only in the mounting that you got it, either. Suppose you went on, regardless of your mutilations, and presently decided to dismount. You put your foot back on the step, slipped out of the saddle, and—bang! once more. The spring collapsed under your weight, you came down astride the backbone with an instant conviction that you were split in halves, your foot jerked off the step, and with a final bang the diabolical contrivance shot up again and tore away any small remnant of calf that might still be clinging to your left leg. It was a wonderful invention, but as a means of mounting a bicycle I somehow got to prefer a convenient lamp-post.

The solid tyres we used then were fixed in the rims with cement. It didn't always hold very well, and sometimes a yard or so of tyre would go loose on the road. On these occasions it was our pleasing practice to burn old newspapers under the rim, or to borrow red-hot pokers to melt the cement. It wasn't a thing you could keep secret, either; people used to cough and bang their windows down. What the cement was made of I never knew, but it diffused a perfume that would lift the hat off your head. It was the most powerful incense I ever smelt—it incensed people a mile off.

Of course, the inventor came along to improve this, too. He ran a wire through the centre of the tyre and joined the ends with a screw, thus compressing the rubber till it gripped the rim tight. The first advantage of this improvement was that you couldn't get the tyre off if you wanted to repair a spoke; the next, that when a speck of rust attacked the wire and ate it through, the tyre jumped off altogether without any warning and caused a pretty complicated smash; and last and best, when the wire *was* broken nothing would hold the rubber on at all—not the incensingest cement in the market.

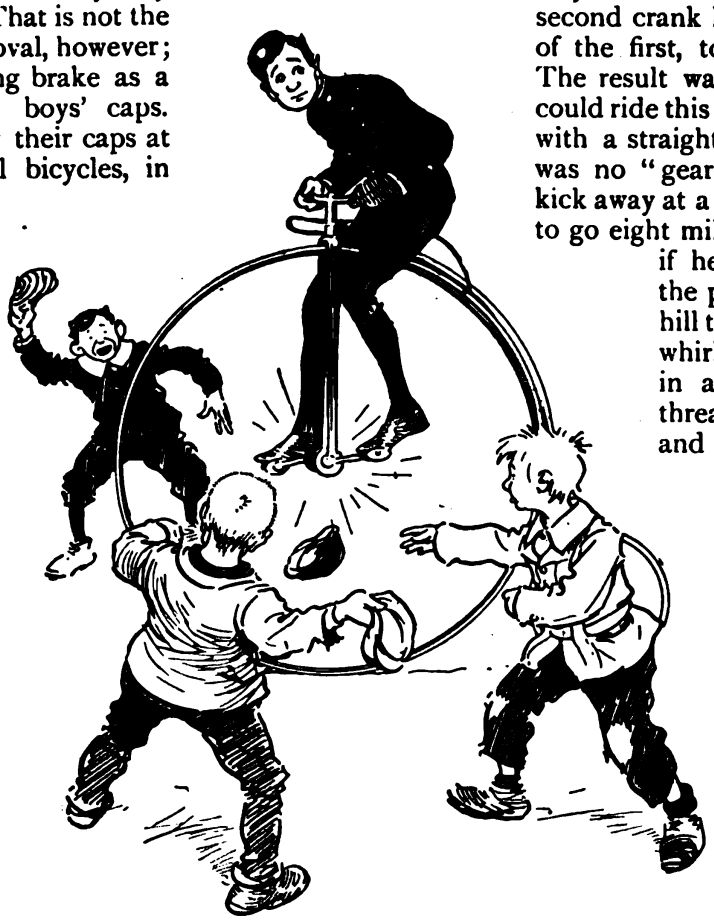
Brakes were interesting things, too. At

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first they acted on the back wheel, and they were worked by a string which you wound up on your handle-bar. Amid the hosts of other troubles it never struck us to consider the winding round and round of a loose handle-bar an inconvenience. These brakes were excellent so long as they were not wanted; when they were the string broke. But I remember one of the string brakes with great pleasure. It did not act on the back wheel, but on the road, and it was called "Carter's Trailing Brake." It was wonderfully effectual in checking the machine. It was a lever across the back wheel, which drove a spike into the road and dragged it along. I cannot say that it improved the road, but it sent a deal of it into the air in the shape of dust and stones, which was very soothing to the eyes of anybody coming behind. That is not the reason of my approval, however; I liked the trailing brake as a sort of trawl for boys' caps. Boys used to fling their caps at the wheels of tall bicycles, in the pious hope of lodging them in the spokes and causing a cropper. But if you rode over a cap and put the trailing brake on, that sportive boy came out one cap behind in the score.

The lump of lead behind was far from being the only attempt to abolish the cropper. There was one thing somebody was always inventing—it must have been invented three or four times a year, at least. That was a tall bicycle with a lot of little wheels all round, like a young family, to be stuck out in all directions and so keep you approximately upright. With this machine you occupied four times the road-space of the common bicycle and had a lot more wheels to tumble over, all for very little extra cost. Also there was another safety invention in the shape of a variable "rake"—which meant the slope of the front forks—set going, like the old brake, by cords. Sometimes it acted at the right time, usually it didn't; but most generally the strings broke, the whole thing came unstuck, and you were either flung forward in the same old familiar orbit over the handles as you went down a hill, or you were violently jerked out backward as you were labouring up one. And so, by many disappointments and a multiplicity of muckers, we came to the safety bicycle at last.

But I rode many other safeties before I arrived at the comfortable machine now in use. Perhaps the very simplest was the "Pony." That was nothing but the "ordinary" bicycle made very small, with a second crank hanging at the end of the first, to carry the pedal. The result was that a tall man could ride this very short machine with a straight leg; but as there was no "gearing up" he had to kick away at a most amazing rate to go eight miles an hour. And if he took his feet off the pedals going down-hill those double cranks whirled round like flails in a large circle and threatened to hammer and batter his legs off unless he hung them up very high out of the way—over his ears might have done, perhaps. Something was devised later to prevent this whirling, but other safeties came along and superseded the "Pony."



BOYS · USED · TO · FLING THEIR · CAPS · AT THE · WHEELS · TOM BROWNE

Of the quaint tricycles I have used there is no space to tell here, nor of the "Otto," an ingenious vehicle, wherein the rider sat between two large wheels, right and left, *above* the centre, to the equal peril of his nose and the back of his head. But perhaps I may tell you tales of my adventures on these another time.

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A SPIRIT OF AVARICE



MR. JOHN BLOWS stood listening to the foreman with an air of lofty disdain. He was a free-born Englishman, and yet he had been summarily paid off at eleven o'clock in the morning and told that his valuable services would no longer be required. More than that, the foreman had passed certain strictures upon his features which, however true they might be, were quite irrelevant to the fact that Mr. Blows had been discovered slumbering in a shed when he should have been laying bricks.

"Take your ugly face off these 'ere works," said the foreman; "take it 'ome and bury it in the back-yard. Anybody'll be glad to lend you a spade."

Mr. Blows, in a somewhat fluent reply, reflected severely on the foreman's immediate ancestors, and the strange lack of good-feeling and public spirit they had exhibited by allowing him to grow up.

"Take it 'ome and bury it," said the foreman again. "Not under any plants you've got a liking for."

"I suppose," said Mr. Blows, still referring to his foe's parents, and now endeavouring to make excuses for them—"I s'pose they was so pleased, and so surprised when they found that you *was* a 'uman being, that they didn't mind anything else."

He walked off with his head in the air, and the other men, who had partially suspended work to listen, resumed their labours. A modest pint at the Rising Sun revived his drooping spirits, and he walked home thinking of several things which he might have said to the foreman if he had only thought of them in time.

He paused at the open door of his house and, looking in, sniffed at the smell of mottled soap and dirty water which pervaded it. The stairs were wet, and a pail stood in the narrow passage. From the kitchen came the sounds of crying children and a scolding mother. Master Joseph Henry Blows, aged three, was "holding his breath," and the family were all aghast at the length of his performance. He recovered it as his father entered the room, and drowned, without distressing himself, the impotent efforts of the others. Mrs. Blows turned upon her husband a look of hot inquiry.

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"I've got the chuck," he said, surlily.

"What, again?" said the unfortunate woman.

"Yes, again," repeated her husband.

Mrs. Blows turned away, and dropping into a chair threw her apron over her head and burst into discordant weeping. Two little Blows, who had ceased their outcries, resumed them again from sheer sympathy.

"Stop it," yelled the indignant Mr. Blows; "stop it at once; d'ye hear?"

"I wish I'd never seen you," sobbed his wife from behind her apron. "Of all the lazy, idle, drunken, good-for-nothing——"

"Go on," said Mr. Blows, grimly.

"You're more trouble than you're worth," declared Mrs. Blows. "Look at your father, my dears," she continued, taking the apron away from her face; "take a good look at him, and mind you don't grow up like it."

Mr. Blows met the combined gaze of his innocent offspring with a dark scowl, and then fell to moodily walking up and down the passage until he fell over the pail. At that his mood changed, and, turning fiercely, he kicked that useful article up and down the passage until he was tired.

"I've 'ad enough of it," he muttered. He stopped at the kitchen-door and, putting his hand in his pocket, threw a handful of change on to the floor and swung out of the house.

Another pint of beer confirmed him in his resolution. He would go far away and make a fresh start in the world. The morning was bright and the air fresh, and a pleasant sense of freedom and adventure possessed his soul as he walked. At a swinging pace he soon left Gravelton behind him, and, coming to the river, sat down to smoke a final pipe before turning his back for ever on a town which had treated him so badly.

The river murmured agreeably and the rushes stirred softly in the breeze; Mr. Blows, who could fall asleep on an upturned pail, succumbed to the influence at once; the pipe dropped from his mouth and he snored peacefully.

He was awakened by a choking scream, and, starting up hastily, looked about for the cause. Then in the water he saw the little white face of Billy Clements, and wading in up to his middle he reached out and, catching the child by the hair, drew him to the bank and set him on his feet. Still screaming with terror, Billy threw up some of the water he had swallowed, and without turning his head made off in the direction of home, calling piteously upon his mother.

Mr. Blows, shivering on the bank, watched him out of sight, and, missing his cap, was just in time to see that friend of several seasons slowly sinking in the middle of the river. He squeezed the water from his trousers and, crossing the bridge, set off across the meadows.

His self-imposed term of bachelorhood lasted just three months, at the end of which time he made up his mind to enact the part of the generous husband and forgive his wife everything. He would not go into details, but issue one big, magnanimous pardon.

Full of these lofty ideas he set off in the direction of home again. It was a three days' tramp, and the evening of the third day saw him but a bare two miles from home. He clambered up the bank at the side of the road and, sprawling at his ease, smoked quietly in the moonlight.

A waggon piled up with straw came jolting and creaking towards him. The driver sat dozing on the shafts, and Mr. Blows smiled pleasantly as he recognised the first face of a friend he had seen for three months. He thrust his pipe in his pocket and, rising to his feet, clambered on to the back of the waggon, and lying face downwards on the straw peered down at the unconscious driver below.

"I'll give old Joe a surprise," he said to himself. "He'll be the first to welcome me back."

"Joe," he said, softly. "'Ow goes it, old pal?"

Mr. Joe Carter, still dozing, opened his eyes at the sound of his name and looked round; then, coming to the conclusion that he had been dreaming, closed them again.

"I'm a-looking at you, Joe," said Mr. Blows, waggishly. "I can see you."

Mr. Carter looked up sharply and, catching sight of the grinning features of Mr. Blows protruding over the edge of the straw, threw up his arms with a piercing shriek and fell off the shafts on to the road. The astounded Mr. Blows, raising himself on his hands, saw him pick himself up and, giving vent to a series of fearsome yelps, run clumsily back along the road.

"Joe!" shouted Mr. Blows. "J-o-o-oe!"

Mr. Carter put his hands to his ears and ran on blindly, while his friend, sitting on the top of the straw, regarded his proceedings with mixed feelings of surprise and indignation.

"It can't be that tanner 'e owes me," he mused, "and yet I don't know what else it can be. I never see a man so jumpy."

He continued to speculate while the old

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"'JOE!' SHOUTED MR. BLOWS. 'J-O-O-OE!'"

horse, undisturbed by the driver's absence, placidly continued its journey. A mile farther, however, he got down to take the short cut by the fields.

"If Joe can't look after his 'orse and cart," he said, primly, as he watched it along the road, "it's not my business."

The footpath was not much used at that time of night, and he only met one man. They were in the shadow of the trees which fringed the new cemetery as they passed, and both peered. The stranger was satisfied first, and, to Mr. Blows's growing indignation, first gave a leap backwards which would not have disgraced an acrobat, and then made off across the field with hideous outcries.

"If I get 'old of some of you," said the offended Mr. Blows, "I'll give you something to holler for."

He pursued his way grumbling, and insensibly slackened his pace as he drew near home. A remnant of conscience which had stuck to him without encouragement for thirty-five years persisted in suggesting that he had behaved badly. It also made a few ill-bred inquiries as to how his wife and children had subsisted for the last three months. He stood outside the house for a short space, and then, opening the door softly, walked in.

The kitchen-door stood open, and his wife in a black dress sat sewing by the light of a smoky lamp. She looked up as she heard his footsteps, and then, without a word, slid from the chair full length to the floor.

"Go on," said Mr. Blows, bitterly; "keep it up. Don't mind me."

Mrs. Blows paid no heed; her face was white and her eyes were closed. Her husband, with a dawning perception of the state of affairs, drew a mug of water from the tap and flung it over her. She opened her eyes and gave a faint scream, and then, scrambling to her feet, tottered towards him and sobbed on his breast.

"There, there," said Mr. Blows. "Don't take on; I forgive you."

"Oh, John," said his wife, sobbing convulsively, "I thought you was dead. I thought you was dead. It's only a fortnight ago since we buried you!"

"*Buried me?*" said the startled Mr. Blows. "*Buried me?*"

"I shall wake up and find I'm dreaming," wailed Mrs. Blows; "I know I shall. I'm always dreaming that you're not dead. Night before last I dreamt that you was alive, and I woke up sobbing as if my 'art would break."

"Sobbing?" said Mr. Blows, with a scowl.

"For joy, John," explained his wife.

Mr. Blows was about to ask for a further explanation of the mystery when he stopped, and regarded with much interest a fair-sized cask which stood in one corner.

"A cask o' beer," he said, staring, as he took a glass from the dresser and crossed over to it. "You don't seem to 'ave taken much 'arm during my—my going after work."

"We 'ad it for the funeral, John," said his wife; "leastways, we 'ad two; this is the second."

Mr. Blows, who had filled the glass, set it down on the table untasted; things seemed a trifle uncanny.

"Go on," said Mrs. Blows; "you've got more right to it than anybody else. Fancy 'aving you here drinking up the beer for your own funeral."

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"I don't understand what you're a-driving at," retorted Mr. Blows, drinking somewhat gingerly from the glass. "'Ow could there be a funeral without me?"

"It's all a mistake," said the overjoyed Mrs. Blows; "we must have buried somebody else. But such a funeral, John; you would ha' been proud if you could ha' seen it. All Gravelton followed, nearly. There was the boys' drum and fife band, and the Ancient Order of Camels, what you used to belong to, turned out with their brass band and banners—all the people marching four abreast and sometimes five."

Mr. Blows's face softened; he had no idea that he had established himself so firmly in the affections of his fellow-townsmen.

"Four mourning carriages," continued his wife, "and the—the hearse, all covered in flowers so that you couldn't see it 'ardly. One wreath cost two pounds."

Mr. Blows endeavoured to conceal his gratification beneath a mask of surliness. "Waste o' money," he growled, and stooping to the cask drew himself another glass of beer.

"Some o' the gentry sent their carriages to follow," said Mrs. Blows, sitting down and clasping her hands in her lap.

"I know one or two that 'ad a liking for me," said Mr. Blows, almost blushing.

"And to think that it's all a mistake," continued his wife. "But I thought it was you; it was dressed like you, and your cap was found near it."

"H'm," said Mr. Blows; "a pretty mess you've been and made of it. Here's people been giving two pounds for wreaths and turning up with brass bands and banners because they thought it was *me*, and it's all been wasted."

"It wasn't my fault," said his wife. "Little Billy Clements came running 'ome the day you went away and said 'e'd fallen in the water, and you'd gone in and pulled 'im out. He said 'e thought you was drownded, and when you didn't come 'ome I naturally thought so too. What else could I think?"

Mr. Blows coughed, and holding his glass up to the light regarded it with a preoccupied air.

"They dragged the river," resumed his wife, "and found the cap, but they didn't find the body till nine weeks afterwards. There was a inquest at the Peal o' Bells, and I identified you, and all that grand funeral was because they thought you'd lost your life saving little Billy. They said you was a hero."

"You've made a nice mess of it," repeated Mr. Blows.

"The rector preached the sermon," continued his wife; "a beautiful sermon it was, too. I wish you'd been there to hear it; I should 'ave enjoyed it ever so much better. He said that nobody was more surprised than what 'e was at your doing such a thing, and that it only showed 'ow little we knew our fellow-creatures. He said that it proved there was good in all of us if we only gave it a chance to come out."



"'THEY DRAGGED THE RIVER,' RESUMED HIS WIFE, 'AND FOUND THE CAP.'"

Mr. Blows eyed her suspiciously, but she sat thinking and staring at the floor.

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"I s'pose we shall have to give the money back now," she said, at last.

"Money!" said the other; "what money?"

"Money that was collected for us," replied his wife. "One 'undered and eighty-three pounds seven shillings and fourpence."

Mr. Blows took a long breath. "'Ow much?" he said, faintly; "say it agin."

His wife obeyed.

"Show it to me," said the other, in trembling tones; "let's 'ave a look at it. Let's 'old some of it."

"I can't," was the reply; "there's a committee of the Camels took charge of it, and they pay my rent and allow me ten shillings a week. Now I s'pose it'll have to be given back?"

"Don't you talk nonsense," said Mr. Blows, violently. "You go to them interfering Camels and say you want your money—all of it. Say you're going to Australia. Say it was my last dying wish."

Mrs. Blows puckered her brow.

"I'll keep quiet upstairs till you've got it," continued her husband, rapidly. "There was only two men saw me, and I can see now that they thought I was my own ghost. Send the kids off to your mother for a few days."

His wife sent them off next morning, and a little later was able to tell him that his surmise as to his friends' mistake was correct. All Gravelton was thrilled by the news that the spiritual part of Mr. John Blows was walking the earth, and much exercised as to his reasons for so doing.

"Seemed such a monkey trick for 'im to do," complained Mr. Carter, to the listening circle at the Peal o' Bells. "'I'm a-looking at you, Joe,' he ses, and he waggled his 'ead as if it was made of india-rubber."

"He'd got something on 'is mind what he wanted to tell you," said a listener, severely; "you ought to 'ave stopped, Joe, and asked 'im what it was."

"I think I see myself," said the shivering Mr. Carter. "I think I see myself."

"Then he wouldn't 'ave troubled you any more," said the other.

Mr. Carter turned pale and eyed him fixedly.

"P'r'aps it was only a death-warning," said another man.

"What d'ye mean, '*only* a death-warning,'?" demanded the unfortunate Mr. Carter; "you don't know what you're talking about."

"I 'ad an uncle o' mine see a ghost once," said a third man, anxious to relieve the tension.

"And what 'appened?" inquired the first speaker.

"I'll tell you after Joe's gone," said the other, with rare consideration.

Mr. Carter called for some more beer and told the barmaid to put a little gin in it. In a pitiable state of "nerves" he sat at the extreme end of a bench, and felt that he was an object of unwholesome interest to his acquaintances. The finishing touch was put to his discomfiture when a well-meaning friend in a vague and disjointed way advised him to give up drink, swearing, and any other bad habits which he might have contracted.



"IN A PITIABLE STATE OF 'NERVES' HE SAT AT THE EXTREME END OF A BENCH."

The committee of the Ancient Order of Camels took the news calmly, and classed it with pink rats and other abnormalities. In

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reply to Mrs. Blows's request for the capital sum, they expressed astonishment that she could be willing to tear herself away from the hero's grave, and spoke of the pain which such an act on her part would cause him in the event of his being conscious of it. In order to show that they were reasonable men they allowed her an extra shilling that week.

The hero threw the dole on the bedroom floor, and in a speech bristling with personalities consigned the committee to perdition. The confinement was beginning to tell upon him, and two nights afterwards, just before midnight, he slipped out for a breath of fresh air.

It was a clear night, and all Gravelton with one exception appeared to have gone to bed. The exception was Police-constable Collins, and he, after tracking the skulking figure of Mr. Blows and finally bringing it to bay in a doorway, kept his for a fortnight. As a sensible man Mr. Blows took no credit to himself for the circumstance, but a natural feeling of satisfaction at the discomfiture of a member of a force for which he had long entertained a strong objection could not be denied.

Gravelton debated this new appearance with bated breath, and even the purblind committee of the Camels had to alter their views. They no longer denied the supernatural nature of the manifestations, but, with a strange misunderstanding of Mr. Blows's desires, attributed his restlessness to dissatisfaction with the projected tombstone, and, having plenty of funds, amended their order from a plain stone at ten guineas to one in pink marble at twenty-five.

"That there committee," said Mr. Blows to his wife, in a trembling voice, as he heard of the alteration—"that there committee seem to think that they can play about with my money as they like. You go and tell 'em you won't 'ave it. And say you've given up the idea of going to Australia and you want the money to open a shop with. We'll take a little pub. somewhere."

Mrs. Blows went, and returned in tears, and for two entire days her husband, a prey to gloom, sat trying to evolve fresh and original ideas for the possession of the money. On the evening of the second day he became low-spirited, and going down to the kitchen took a glass from the dresser and sat down by the beer cask.

Almost insensibly he began to take a brighter view of things. It was Saturday night and his wife was out. He shook his head indulgently as he thought of her, and began to realize how foolish he had been to entrust such a delicate mission to a woman. The Ancient Order of Camels wanted a man to talk to them—a man who knew the world and could assail them with unanswerable arguments. Having applied every known test to make sure that the cask was empty, he took his cap from a nail and sallied out into the street.

Old Mrs. Martin, a neighbour, saw him first, and announced the fact with a scream that brought a dozen people round her. Bereft of speech, she mouthed dumbly at Mr. Blows.

"I ain't touch—touched her," said that gentleman, earnestly. "I ain't—been near 'er."

The crowd regarded him wild-eyed. Fresh members came running up, and pushing for a front place fell back hastily on the main body and watched breathlessly. Mr. Blows, disquieted by their silence, renewed his protestations.

"I was coming 'long——"

He broke off suddenly and, turning round, gazed with some heat at a gentleman who was endeavouring to ascertain whether an umbrella would pass through him. The investigator backed hastily into the crowd again, and a faint murmur of surprise arose as the indignant Mr. Blows rubbed the place.

"He's alive, I tell you," said a voice. "What cheer, Jack!"

"Ullo, Bill," said Mr. Blows, genially.

Bill came forward cautiously, and, first shaking hands, satisfied himself by various little taps and prods that his friend was really alive.

"It's all right," he shouted; "come and feel."

At least fifty hands accepted the invitation, and, ignoring the threats and entreaties of Mr. Blows, who was a highly ticklish subject, wandered briskly over his anatomy. He broke free at last and, supported by Bill and a friend, set off for the Peal o' Bells.

By the time he arrived there his following had swollen to immense proportions. Windows were thrown up, and people standing on their doorsteps shouted inquiries. Congratulations met him on all sides, and the joy of Mr. Joseph Carter was so great that Mr. Blows was quite affected.

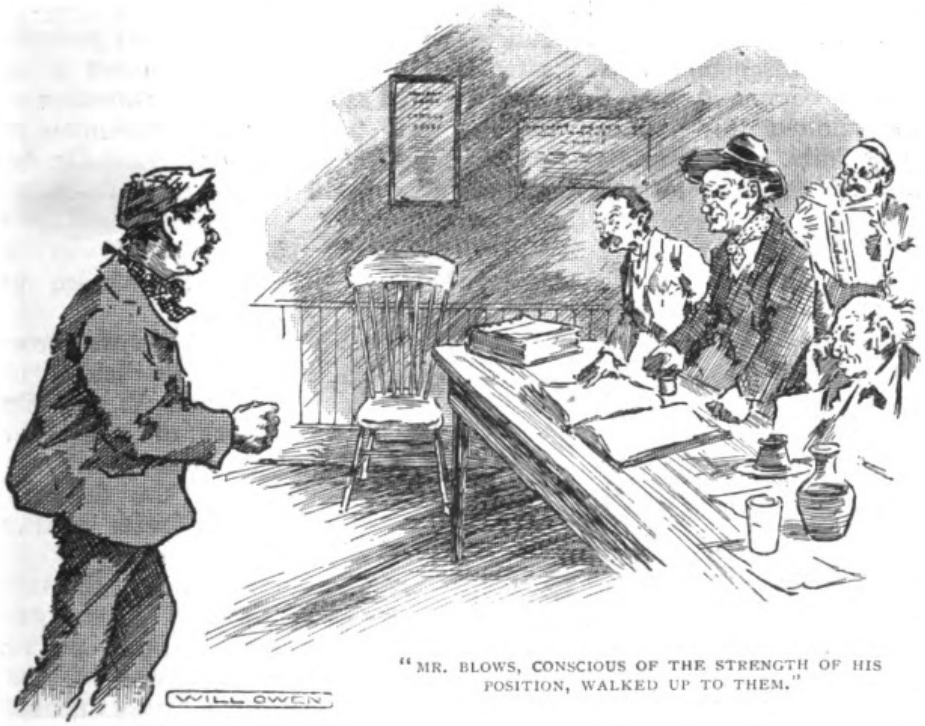
In high feather at the attention he was receiving, Mr. Blows pushed his way through the idlers at the door and ascended the short flight of stairs which led to the room where the members of the Ancient Order of Camels

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were holding their lodge. The crowd swarmed up after him.

The door was locked, but in response to his knocking it opened a couple of inches, and a gruff voice demanded his business. Then, before he could give it, the doorkeeper reeled back into the room, and Mr. Blows with a large following pushed his way in.

The president and his officers, who were sitting in state behind a long table at the end of the room, started to their feet with mingled cries of indignation and dismay at the intrusion. Mr. Blows, conscious of the strength of his position, walked up to them.



"MR. BLOWS, CONSCIOUS OF THE STRENGTH OF HIS POSITION, WALKED UP TO THEM."

"*Mr. Blows!*" gasped the president.

"Ah, you didn't expec' see me," said Mr. Blows, with a scornful laugh. "They're trying do me, do me out o' my lill bit o' money, Bill."

"But you ain't got no money," said his bewildered friend.

Mr. Blows turned and eyed him haughtily; then he confronted the staring president again.

"I've come for—my money," he said, impressively—"one 'undereighty pounds."

"But look 'ere," said the scandalized Bill, tugging at his sleeve; "you ain't dead, Jack."

"You don't understan'," said Mr. Blows, impatiently. "They know wharri mean; one 'undereighty pounds. They want to buy me a tombstone, an' I don't want it. I want the money. Here, stop it! *D'ye hear?*" The words were wrung from him by the action of the president, who, after eyeing him doubtfully during his remarks, suddenly prodded him with the butt-end of one of the property spears which leaned against his chair. The solidity of Mr. Blows was unmistakable, and with a sudden resumption of dignity the official seated himself and called for silence.

"I'm sorry to say there's been a bit of a mistake made," he said, slowly, "but I'm glad to say that Mr. Blows has come back to support his wife and family with the sweat of his own brow. Only a pound or two of the money so kindly subscribed has been spent, and the remainder will be handed back to the subscribers."

"Here," said the incensed Mr. Blows, "listen me."

"Take him away," said the president, with great dignity. "Clear the room. Strangers outside."

Two of the members approached Mr. Blows and, placing their hands on his shoulders, requested him to withdraw. He went at last, the centre of a dozen panting men, and becoming wedged on the narrow staircase spoke fluently on such widely different subjects as the rights of man and the shape of the president's nose.

He finished his remarks in the street, but, becoming aware at last of a strange lack of sympathy on the part of his audience, he shook off the arm of the faithful Mr. Carter and stalked moodily home.

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From Behind the Speaker's Chair.

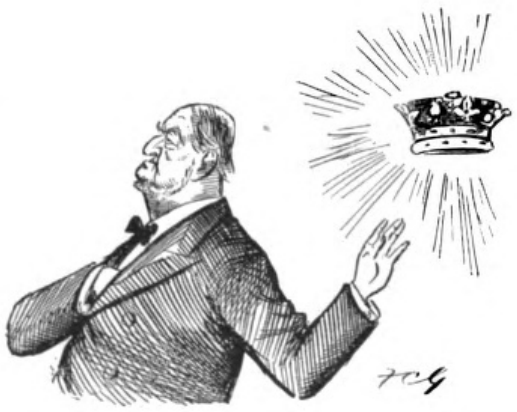
LXXVII.

(VIEWED BY HENRY W. LUCY.)

CORONATION HONOURS.

ON the publication of the list of Coronation honours the House of Commons was much piqued at the choice of Liberals apparently made by Lord Salisbury and Mr. Balfour. I am assured on high personal authority that His Majesty's Ministers had nothing to do with the selection made in the Liberal camp. His Majesty conveyed to the Prime Minister intimation of desire that in the special circumstances the bestowal of honours should, as far as possible, be free from trace of political partisanship. The only way to meet this command was to divide the honours allotted to political personages. This was fairly, even liberally, done. But the procedure took the form of placing at the disposal of the Leaders of the Opposition in the House of Lords and in the House of Commons a certain number of honours, leaving allotment to them.

This done, the ordinary course was followed, formal communication of the bestowal of the honour being, save in respect of the peerages, conveyed by the Ministers. The new peers received holograph letters from the King. The one written to Sir William Harcourt was a charming example of the graceful manner and kind heart of His Majesty. It will be a heirloom as precious as a patent of the peerage. On Sir William Harcourt begging to be excused leaving an assembly in which he had lived and worked for thirty-four years, His Majesty wrote a second long letter marked by even increased warmth of friendship and appreciation for the veteran statesman.



"NOLO CORONETARI."

THREATENED REVOLT OF THE JUDGES.

The distinction of Privy Councillor is, after all, the highest a Sovereign can bestow. It was borne by Disraeli in his prime. It sufficed Peel and Gladstone to the last. Mr. Arthur Balfour, with choice of stars and ribbons galore, not to mention a peerage at his command, is proudly content with its simplicity.

It is true that of late years some alloy has been introduced into the aggregate of purest metal. When the earliest arrangements for the Coronation were settled it was discovered that the judges were divided into two classes, those who were Privy Councillors and those who were not. The former had allotted to them especially good points of view in the Abbey, the other judges—and judges, when divested of wig and gown, are, after all, almost human—murmured at what they regarded as an invidious distinction. A meeting was held at which there was talk of resenting the slight by abstaining from attendance. Good temper and contentment were restored by the wise words of the youngest judge present.

"When we remember," he said, "that X. and Y. are members of the Privy Council, don't you think the distinction really rests with us who are not?"

The fact that their learned brother had sat for ten years in the House of Commons in the same political camp as the right hon. gentlemen of whom he spoke sharpened the point of the observation. The judges resolved to take no notice of the arbitrary division of the Bench, ignoring the pretension it conveyed of the superiority of Privy Councillors.

A DISESTABLISHED P.C.

The Privy Councillorship worthily bestowed upon Mr. Haldane carries with it a privilege not generally recognised. He may, if he pleases, take a seat on the Front Opposition Bench. Ostensibly that grove of peace is reserved for ex-Ministers; but Privy Councillors who have never held office under the Crown have equal right to sit there.

An interesting case in point is supplied by the late Beresford Hope. When Big Ben —not the clock, but the member for Norfolk,

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called Big Ben to distinguish him from another Bentinck known as Little Ben—disappeared from the Parliamentary scene Mr. Beresford Hope claimed, and secured, reversion of his seat. It was the corner seat of the Front Bench below the gangway, to the right of the Speaker when his party was in office, to the left when they went into Opposition. There he sat when in 1880 Mr. Gladstone came into office with an overwhelming majority, all unknowing that in the biscuit was a weevil presently to be known as the Fourth Party, that would eat its way right through. When Lord Randolph Churchill, in 1880 a Parliamentary babe, began to feel his feet, he found Mr. Beresford Hope, reclining in the corner seat, somewhat in the way. Nothing was sacred to this Parliamentary *sapeur*, not even Mr. Arthur Balfour's kinsman. In a very brief time he succeeded in hustling the right hon. gentleman out of his freehold.

Beresford Hope, having no other settled place at his disposal, bethought him of his Privy Councillorship. Crossing the gangway he took his seat on the Front Opposition Bench, in the seat now occupied by Mr. John Morley. There, to the end of a blameless, dignified life, he sat, chuckling with almost maternal pleasure at the hatching of the egg of his nephew Arthur's Parliamentary fame.



ENEMIES ON HIS FLANK.

A DISCONCERTING WEDGE.

A multiple illustration of the rule was presented six years later. When after the *débâcle* at the polls in 1886 Mr. Gladstone and his colleagues, in the brief Administration formed in February of that year, crossed the floor of the House, Lord Hartington, Mr. Chamberlain, Sir Henry James, and eke Mr. Heneage claimed the right to seat themselves on the Front Opposition Bench. They had not formed part of the outgoing Ministry. But they were Privy Councillors, and were not disposed to abrogate their privilege on account of any inconvenience its exercise might occasion to their old chief.

The faithful persistence of the claim led to some memorable scenes when Mr. Gladstone, pouring contumely and scorn on his political opponents opposite, turned and almost bent over his former colleagues, apportioning their share. Mr. Chamberlain was not the man to shirk reprisal. When his turn came hon. gentlemen opposite were delighted to find Mr. Gladstone rated in bitter tones by an occupant of the Front Opposition Bench.

The distinction between the two Front Benches was marked when, in 1892, Mr. Gladstone recrossed the floor of the House to assume its leadership. Mr. Chamberlain and his right hon. friends were not going to be left behind to rank as Conservatives. They had not at that time left the Liberal party; the Liberal party, straying from the right path, had left them. They accordingly crossed the floor of the House with Mr. Gladstone. But a Privy Councillorship not carrying with it a seat on the Treasury Bench, they appropriated the second bench behind, a wedge driven into the body corporate of the Liberal party which in due time hopelessly split it.

CORNER SEATS.

Mr. Haldane tells me he has no intention of availing himself of his rights. He will continue to comfort his leaders and counsel the House of Commons from his old quarters immediately behind the Front Bench. The sole advantage of a seat on the Front Opposition Bench—exclusive of opportunity of close study in the gentle art of amity—is that the incumbent is relieved from the necessity of being down at prayers as a preliminary to securing a place.

That is a rule that orders the ways of all unofficial members, with the exception of a few veterans. Mr. Chaplin upon his retirement from the Ministry secured the corner seat below the gangway, long associated with the melancholy presence of Mr. Newdegate. Sir James Fergusson, another ex-Minister, fills the corner seat above the gangway on the same line. Below him sits Mr. Gibson Bowles, who has lived down the organized conspiracy which, three years ago, sought to deprive him of his favourite pitch. Those were the days when Mr. Gedge and Mr. Macdona, rising up early, took possession of the coveted coign of vantage. Mr. Bowles is hard to beat. If his assailants appeared on the scene at eight in the morn-

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ing, they discovered "Tommy" had been there at seven, as witness his card or his spare hat planted out on the bench. If they were there at seven, he turned up at six. So the two parties worked back towards the first hour of day.

Once Mr. Macdona, having got in first, made a short speech in the current debate. He was followed by Mr. Bowles, rising from below the gangway. Having, in his clearly-cut sentences, demonstrated a certain position, he turned a withering glance on Mr. Macdona and said, "Then the hon. member rises in his place—or, rather, in my place—and commits himself to the absurdity of affirming the converse."



TOMMY BOWLES ON HIS PERCH.

At the General Election of 1900, following on the conclusion of a war that perversely continued for eighteen months after it was "over," a thunderbolt fell on one of the disturbers of Mr. Bowles's peace. Mr. Gedge lost his seat, and Mr. Macdona, seeing in the calamity the finger of a vengeful Providence, refrained from further sacrilege.

A new-comer, Mr. Winston Churchill, looks upon this corner seat with envious eye. In the owner's temporary absence he drops into it. But he never disputes Mr. Bowles's right to resume his place on his return. Mr. James Lowther, by common consent, enjoys the leasehold of the most favoured corner seat, that on the Front Bench below the gangway. The corresponding seat on the opposite side of the House, for ever associated with Lord Randolph Churchill when Leader of the Fourth Party, is held by Mr. Labouchere with reversion to Sir Charles Dilke, a right frequently enjoyed. The member for Northampton often prefers his Apostolic Chair in the smoking-room to the dulness of procedure in the present House of Commons.

Whilst Mr. Lowther holds his seat without the tribute of attendance at prayers, the corner seat opposite is, or till recent date was, secured on the usual terms. It is an old story how Mr. Gedge, ostensibly engaged in prayer, really watching Sir Charles Dilke through the lattice of open fingers, saw him, having inserted his own card in the back of the second seat, affix Mr. Labouchere's in the corner seat, which thing is a breach of one of the elementary laws of the British Constitution.

Mr. Lloyd George has secured the corner seat on the second bench below the gangway on the Opposition side, Mr. Dillon being behind him, and Mr. John Redmond at the corner of the fourth bench.

PROPHECY AND POLITICS.

Amongst other claims to pre-eminence Mr. Chamberlain is the shrewdest living calculator of the chances of a pending General Election. When the poll started in the election of 1885 it was alarmingly dispiriting for the Liberals, who expected to sweep the country. On the third day after it opened the record showed 117 Liberals returned and 119 Conservatives. The Metropolitan boroughs returned twenty-eight Conservatives against seventeen Liberals. Everywhere the boroughs showed themselves unexpectedly Tory, the beginning of a movement that has since gone far. The natural consequence was jubilation in the Conservative camp, depression among Liberals. I well remember a remark made by Mr. Chamberlain in company where the situation was discussed.

"Wait a bit," he said, with inspiring confidence. "Wait till the counties poll, and then you'll see where we are."



MR. LABOUCHERE'S PERCH.

We waited accordingly, and when the roll of Parliament was made up it was found that the House of Commons was composed of 334 Liberals, 250 Conservatives, and eighty-six Nationalists, giving Mr. Gladstone, within two votes, a following equal to the combined forces of Nationalists and Conservatives.

Mr. Chamberlain meekly admits that he

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was out of his reckoning in respect of the election of 1900. He estimated that the Unionist Government would be reinstated by an increase of ten on their majority. It turned out to be an increase of four —134 as compared with 130 at the date of the dissolution. I believe Lord Salisbury took the plunge with the belief that, though a working majority was assured, there would be serious reduction of the Ministerial host elected on the Unionist platform. But they don't know everything down at the Foreign Office, least of all so inconsiderable an entity as the British elector.

NEXT TIME.

Remembering the success of his prognostication, it is interesting to know what Mr. Chamberlain thinks of the prospect of the next General Election. He does not, at present, think about it at all, being convinced that, bar unparalleled accident, the present Parliament will run its full appointed course. It will be time enough somewhere about autumn 1905 to begin to form opinion on the issue of a General Election. But the Colonial Secretary has a well-defined and fearless opinion about the result of a General Election should it be forced at the present time. He believes that if it were to take place next week the Government would be reinstated in power with at least the numerical majority that placed them there in October, 1900.

"A TENDER-HEARTED FANATIC."

There was something tragic about the death of Johnston of Ballykilbeg. He was in the House on a Thursday night, when he heard Mr. Wyndham, with that pedantry that pertains to officials, upset a cherished project. Rostrevor is, it appears, a stronghold of Roman Catholicism in the North of Ireland. *Argal*, it was the very place upon which, on the 12th of July, anniversary of a blessed memory, Orangemen should march with sashes flaunting and drums beating. Rostrevor, to do it justice, did not shirk the ordeal. On the contrary, its inhabitants joyously prepared to welcome the coming guests. Then the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant steps on the scene and, with deplorable lack of human sympathy, prohibits the excursion on the prosaic ground that if it were permitted there would be a battle-royal, a field strewn with dead and wounded. With the best intentions he added to the aggravation of the disappointment. Moved by protests against the prohibition, he consented to the Orangemen going as far as Warren Point, whence, with the aid of field-glasses, they might catch glimpses of the Catholics waiting for them at Rostrevor. Though well-meant, this was a concession almost inhuman in its ingenious cruelty. It was like spreading a toothsome banquet before a hungry tiger, taking care that the meal should be set outside the impassable bars of his cage.



THE LATE MR. JOHNSTON OF BALLYKILBEG.

Johnston of Ballykilbeg, depressed at this extraordinary conduct on the part of a Government he had loyally supported, immediately left for Ireland to take part in the Downpatrick celebration of the happy day. In the course of the ceremony he caught a chill, and exactly a week after he left the House of Commons in his usual health the blinds were drawn down at Ballykilbeg, and there was a vacancy in the representation of West Belfast.

INSPECTOR OF FISHERIES.

Mr. Johnston was a curious compound of the fanatic and the man of tender heart. I do not know whether in his long career, crowned with the rank of Grand Master of Grand Black Chapter of Ireland, he ever really, overtly or covertly, heaved half a brick at a Papist; whether, indeed, he ever shouted the watchword of militant Orangeism which consigns the Holy Father to eternal perdition. One never knows what unexpected things a man may do in moments of excitement. Out of Belfast Johnston of Ballykilbeg was the mildest-mannered man that ever wore an orange scarf. The spectacle of Irish Nationalist members seated opposite him, putting questions designed to belittle the memory of William III. and extol the parish priest, occasionally led him into truculent observations. He had a way of supplementing such inquiries by others designed to show matters

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in quite another light. They involved aspersions at least equalled in malignity to the question on the paper. But no one seemed a penny the worse. The Irish members boisterously cheered him. The Chief Secretary got out of the difficulty by observing that he had "no information on the point mentioned by my hon. friend," and then turned to read the written answer to the question on the paper provided for him by the Irish Office.

For one of his kindly disposition, Johnston of Ballykilbeg's life was marked by turmoil. He emerged from obscurity in the arms of the police, who arrested him, *flagrante delicto*, taking part in a proscribed Orange procession. That was quite enough for the people of Belfast. They straightway elected him their member, and through the prison door Mr. Johnston entered the portals of the House of Commons. After he had been in the House ten years Disraeli, who loved a joke and was not to be barred off enjoyment by ordinary considerations, made him Inspector of Fisheries. At the date when he was inducted in his important office the only acquaintance with fisheries or fish Johnston of Ballykilbeg boasted was that acquired at the breakfast-table, where was served the homely haddock or the frisky fresh herring. But he could learn, and the salary was £800 a year.

Unfortunately, after he had served for seven years and was really beginning to master the difference between fly-fishing and gathering in the teeming multitude of the deep in a net, he strayed into a meeting of the General Synod of the Church of Ireland. A speech made by one of the authorities stirred his blood. Up he got and delivered an oration revolutionary in its tendencies, almost bloodthirsty in its aspirations. Certainly it was incongruous on the part of one of Her Majesty's Inspectors of Irish Fisheries. Notice was called to the tirade in the House of Commons, with the result that Earl Spencer, then Lord Lieutenant, was obliged to dismiss the eloquent Inspector. South Belfast retorted by electing him its member, and Johnston of Ballykilbeg returned in triumph to the House of Commons.

In the very last speech he delivered, within ten days of his sudden cutting off, he alluded to the dismissal of 1885. It followed, he said, on a question put by Mr. Tim Healy, who he believed had ever since regretted his interposition. "Hear, hear!" cried Tim, heartily. It was a happy accident that, in what chanced to be his last speech in an assembly where he first took his seat thirty-four years ago, there should have been sounded this truce with his ancient foes in politics and religion. The warfare was, in truth, mimic. The Irish Nationalist members respected the rugged eccentricity of Johnston of Ballykilbeg, and he had a sneaking affection for them.

It was a mark of his indomitable character, in small things as in great, that he was thrice married.

MR. BRIGHT'S SPEECHES.

I continue to receive letters on the subject of Mr. Bright's methods of preparing his speeches. The following interesting memorandum is from a correspondent at Brighton: "With reference to your note in the August number of THE STRAND MAGAZINE, might I call your attention to the fact that in No. 3 of that magazine (March, 1891) there is a facsimile of the notes of Mr. Bright's speech in the House of Commons (April 26th, 1876) on the Woman Suffrage Bill? The notes were on four half-sheets of note-paper, and, judging from the report in the next day's *Daily News*, I should think the speech took about forty minutes in delivery. In the *Contemporary Review* for May, 1889, there is a paper on John Bright by Mr. R. W. Dale, of Birmingham, and at the end of the article is a facsimile of the first and the last sheets of the five pages of notes used for Mr. Bright's annual address to his constituents at Birmingham, January 12th, 1878. On the conclusion Mr. Bright gave the notes to Mr. Dale. The speech on that occasion was about an hour, or an hour and five minutes, in delivery. The same article also contains an extract from a letter of Mr. Bright's to a correspondent on the question of the use of notes in speechmaking This letter is given in full in 'The Public Letters of the Right Hon. John Bright, M.P.,' second edition, 1895, page 298"

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By E. Nesbit.

VII.—THE ELDER BROTHER.

CYRIL had once pointed out that ordinary life is full of occasions on which a wish would be most useful. And this thought filled his mind when he happened to wake early on the morning after the morning after Robert had wished to be bigger than the baker's boy, and had been it. The day that lay between these two days had been occupied entirely by getting the governess-cart home from Benenhurst.

Cyril dressed hastily; he did not take a bath because tin baths are so noisy and he had no wish to rouse Robert, and he slipped off alone, as Anthea had once done, and ran through the dewy morning to the sand-pit. He dug up the psammead very carefully and kindly, and began the conversation by asking it whether it still felt any ill-effects from the contact with the tears of Robert the day before yesterday. The psammead was in a good temper. It replied politely.

"And now what can I do for you?" it said. "I suppose you've come here so early to ask for something for yourself—something your brothers and sisters aren't to know about—eh? Now, do be persuaded for your own good! Ask for a good fat megatherium and have done with it."

"Thank you—not to-day, I think," said Cyril, cautiously. "What I really wanted to say was—you know how you're always wishing for things when you're playing at anything?"

"I seldom play," said the psammead, coldly.

"Well, you know what I mean," Cyril went on, impatiently. "What I want to say is: won't you let us have our wish just when we think of it, and just where we happen to be, so that we don't have to come and disturb you again?" added the artful Cyril.

"It'll only end in your wishing for something you don't really want," said the psammead, stretching its brown hands and yawning. "It's always the same since people left off eating really wholesome things. However, have it your own way. Good bye!"

"Good-bye!" said Cyril, politely.

"I'll tell you what," said the psammead, suddenly, shooting out its long snail's eyes; "I'm getting tired of you—all of you. You have no more sense than so many oysters. Go along with you."

And Cyril went.

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"What an awful long time babies *stay* babies!" said Cyril, after the Lamb had taken his watch out of his pocket while he wasn't noticing, and with coos and clucks of naughty rapture had opened the case and used the whole thing as a garden spade, and when even immersion in a washhand basin had failed to wash the mould from the works and make the watch go again. Cyril had said several things in the heat of the moment; but now he was calmer, and had even consented to carry the Lamb part of the way to the woods. Cyril had persuaded the others to agree to his plan and not to wish for anything more till they really did wish it. Meantime it seemed good to go to the woods for nuts, and on the mossy grass under a sweet chestnut tree the five were sitting. The Lamb was pulling up the moss by fat handfuls, and Cyril was gloomily contemplating the ruins of his watch.



"HE OPENED THE CASE AND USED THE WHOLE THING AS A GARDEN SPADE."

"He does grow," said Anthea. "Doesn't oo, precious?"

"Me grow," said the Lamb, cheerfully—"me grow big boy, have guns an' mouses—an'—an'——." Imagination or vocabulary gave out here. But any way it was the longest speech the Lamb had ever made, and it charmed everyone, even Cyril, who tumbled the Lamb over and rolled him in the moss to the music of delighted squeals.

"I suppose he'll be grown up some day," Anthea was saying, dreamily looking up at the blue of the sky that showed between the long, straight chestnut leaves. But at that moment the Lamb, struggling gaily with Cyril, thrust a stoutly-shod little foot against his brother's chest, there was a crack, and the innocent Lamb had broken the glass of father's second-best Waterbury watch, which Cyril had borrowed without leave.

"Grow up some day," said Cyril, bitterly, plumping the Lamb down on the grass. "I dare say he will — when nobody wants him to. I wish to goodness he would——"

"*Oh*, take care," cried Anthea, in an agony of apprehension. But it was too late. Like music to a song her words and Cyril's came out together.

Anthea: "Oh, take care."

Cyril: "Grow up now."

The faithful psammead was true to its promise, and there, before the horrified eyes of its brothers and sisters, the Lamb suddenly and violently grew up. It was a most terrible moment. The change was not so sudden as the wish changes usually were. The baby's face changed first. It grew thinner and larger, lines came in the forehead, the eyes grew more deep-set and darker in colour, the mouth grew longer and thinner; most terrible of all, a little dark moustache appeared on the lip of one who was still, except as to the face, a two-year-old baby in a linen smock and white open-work socks.

"Oh, I wish it wouldn't—oh, I wish it wouldn't—you boys might wish as well." They all wished hard, for the sight was enough to dismay the most heartless. They all wished so hard, indeed, that they felt quite giddy and almost lost consciousness; but the wishing was quite vain, for when the

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wood ceased to whirl round their dazzled eyes were riveted at once by the spectacle of a very proper-looking young man in grey flannels and a straw hat—a young man who wore the same little black moustache which just before they had actually seen growing upon the baby's lip. This, then, was the Lamb—grown up! Their own Lamb! It was a terrible moment. The grown-up Lamb moved gracefully across the moss and settled himself against the trunk of the sweet chestnut. He tilted the straw hat over his eyes. He was evidently weary. He was going to sleep. The Lamb—the original, little, tiresome, beloved Lamb—often went to sleep at odd times and in unexpected places. Was this new Lamb in the grey flannel suit and the pale green necktie like the other Lamb, or had his mind grown up together with his body?

That was the question which the others, in a hurried council held among the yellowing bracken a few yards from the sleeper, debated eagerly.

"Whichever it is it'll be just as awful," said Anthea; "if his inside senses are grown up, too, he won't stand our looking after him; and if he's still a baby inside of him, how on earth are we to get him to do anything? And it'll be getting on for dinner-time in a minute——"

"And we haven't got any nuts," said Jane.

"Oh, bother nuts," said Robert, "but dinner's different; I didn't have half enough dinner the day before yesterday. Couldn't we tie him to the tree and go home to our dinners and come back afterwards?"

"A fat lot of dinner we should get if we went back without the Lamb!" said Cyril, in scornful misery. "And it'll be just the same if we go back *with* him, in the state he is now. Yes; I know it's my doing; don't rub it in! I know I'm a beast and not fit to live; you can take that for settled and say no more about it. The question is, what are we going to do?"

"Let's wake him up and take him into Rochester or Maidstone and get some grub at a pastrycook's," said Robert, hopefully.

"Take him?" repeated Cyril. "Yes—do! It's all my fault, I don't deny that, but you'll find you've got your work cut out for you if you try to take that young man anywhere. The Lamb always was spoilt, but now he's grown up he's a demon, simply. I can see it; look at his mouth."

"Well, then," said Robert, "let's wake him up and see what *he'll* do. Perhaps *he'll* take *us* to Maidstone and stand sam. He ought to have a hat of money in the pockets of those extra special bags. We *must* have dinner, any way."

They drew lots with little bits of bracken. It fell to Jane's lot to waken the grown-up Lamb.

She did it gently by tickling his nose with a twig of wild honeysuckle. He said "Bother the flies" twice, and then opened his eyes.

"Halloa, kiddies!" he said, in a languid



"SHE DID IT GENTLY BY TICKLING HIS NOSE WITH A TWIG."

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tone, "still here? What's the giddy hour? You'll be late for your grub!"

"I know we shall," said Robert, bitterly.

"Then cut along home," said the grown-up Lamb.

"What about *your* grub, though?" asked Jane.

"Oh, how far is it to the station, do you think? I've a sort of notion that I'll run up to town and have some lunch at the club."

Blank misery fell like a pall on the four others. The Lamb—alone—unattended—would go to town and have lunch at a club! Perhaps he would also have tea there. Perhaps sunset would come upon him amid the dazzling luxury of club-land, and a helpless, cross, sleepy baby would find itself alone amid unsympathetic waiters, and would wail miserably for Panty from the depths of a club arm-chair! The picture moved Anthea almost to tears.

"Oh, no, Lamb, ducky, you mustn't do that," she cried, incautiously.

The grown-up Lamb frowned. "My dear Anthea," he said, "how often am I to tell you that my name is Hilary, or St. Maur, or Devereux—any of my baptismal names are free to my little brothers and sisters, but *not* 'Lamb'—a relic of foolish and far-off childhood."

This was awful. He was their elder brother now, was he? Well, of course he was, if he was grown up. Thus, in whispers, Anthea and Robert.

But the almost daily adventures resulting from the psammead wishes were making the children wise beyond their years.

"Dear Hilary," said Anthea, and the others choked at the name. "You know father didn't wish you to go to London. He wouldn't like us to be left alone without you to take care of us! . . . Oh, deceitful beast that I am!" she added to herself.

"Look here," said Cyril, "if you're our elder brother why not behave as sich, and take us over to Maidstone and give us a jolly good blow-out, and we'll go on the river afterwards."

"I'm infinitely obliged to you," said the Lamb, courteously, "but I should prefer solitude. Go home to your lunch—I mean your dinner. Perhaps I may look in about tea-time—or I may not be home till after you are in your beds."

Their beds! Speaking glances flashed between the wretched four. Much bed there would be for them if they went home without the Lamb.

"We promised mother not to lose sight of you if we took you out," Jane said, before the others could stop her.

"Look here, Jane," said the grown-up Lamb, putting his hands in his pockets and looking down at her, "little girls should be seen and not heard. You kids must learn not to make yourselves a nuisance. Run along home now, and perhaps if you're good I'll give you each a penny to-morrow."

"Look here," said Cyril, in the best "man to man" tone at his command, "where are you going, old man? You might let Bobs and me come with you, even if you don't want the girls."

This was really rather noble of Cyril; for he never had cared much about being seen in public with the Lamb, who, of course, after sunset would be a baby again.

The "man to man" tone succeeded.

"I shall just run over to Maidstone on my



"THERE, SURE ENOUGH, STOOD A BICYCLE."

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bike," said the new Lamb, airily, fingering the little black moustache. "I can lunch at the Crown—and perhaps I'll have a pull on the river—but I can't take you all on the machine, now, can I? Run along home like good children."

The position was desperate. Robert exchanged a despairing look with Cyril. Anthea detached a safety-pin from her waistband, a pin whose withdrawal left a gaping chasm between skirt and bodice, and handed it furtively to Robert, with a grimace of the darkest and deepest meaning. Robert slipped away to the road. There, sure enough, stood a bicycle—a beautiful new free-wheel. Of course, Robert understood at once that if the Lamb was grown up he *must* have a bicycle. This had always been one of Robert's own reasons for wishing to be grown up. He hastily began to use the pin—eleven punctures in the back tyre, seven in the front. He would have made the total twenty-two but for the rustling of the yellow hazel leaves, which warned him of the approach of the others. He hastily leaned a hand on each wheel and was rewarded by the "whish" of what was left of air escaping from eighteen neat pinholes.

"Your bike's run down," said Robert, wondering how he could so soon have learned to deceive.

"So it is," said Cyril.

"It's a puncture," said Anthea, stooping down and standing up again with a thorn which she had got ready for the purpose. "Look here."

The grown-up Lamb — or Hilary, as I suppose one must now call him—fixed his pump and blew up the tyre. The punctured state of it was soon evident.

"I suppose there's a cottage somewhere near where one could get a pail of water?" said the Lamb.

There was—and when the number of punctures had been made manifest it was felt to be a special blessing that the cottage provided "teas for cyclists." It provided an odd sort of tea-and-hammy meal for the Lamb and his brothers and sisters. This was paid for out of the fifteen shillings which had been earned by Robert when he was a giant; for the Lamb, it appeared, had, unfortunately, no money about him. This was a great disappointment for the others, but it is a thing that will happen even to the most grown up of us. However, Robert had enough to eat, and that was something. Quietly but persistently the miserable four took it in turns to try and persuade the Lamb (or St. Maur) to spend the rest of the day in the woods.



"THE PUNCTURED STATE OF IT WAS SOON EVIDENT."

There was not very much of the day left by the time he had mended the eighteenth puncture. He looked up from the completed work with a sigh of relief, and suddenly put his tie straight.

"There's a lady coming," he said, briskly; "for goodness' sake get out of the way. Go home—hide—vanish somehow. I can't be seen with a pack of dirty kids." His brothers and sisters were indeed rather dirty, because earlier in the day the Lamb, in his infant

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state, had sprinkled a good deal of garden soil over them. The grown-up Lamb's voice was so tyrant-like, as Jane said afterwards, that they actually retreated to the back-garden and left him with his little moustache and his flannel suit to meet alone the young lady, who now came up the front garden wheeling a bicycle.

The woman of the house came out and the young lady spoke to her. The Lamb raised his hat as she passed him, and the children could not hear what she said, though they were craning round the corner by the pig-pail and listening with all their ears. They felt it to be "perfectly fair," as Robert said, "with that wretched Lamb in that condition."

When the Lamb spoke in a languid voice, heavy with politeness, they heard well enough.

"A puncture?" he was saying. "Can I not be of any assistance? If you would allow me——?"

There was a stifled explosion of laughter behind the pig-pail; the grown-up Lamb (otherwise Devereux) turned the tail of an angry eye in its direction.

"You're very kind," said the lady, looking at the Lamb. She looked rather shy, but, as the boys put it, there didn't seem to be any nonsense about her.

"But, oh," whispered Cyril, behind the pig-pail, "I should have thought he'd had enough bicycle-mending for one day, and, if she only knew that really and truly he's only a whiny-piny, silly little baby!"

"He's *not*," Anthea murmured, angrily. "He's a dear, if people only let him alone. It's our own precious Lamb still, whatever silly idiots may turn him into, isn't he, Pussy?"

Jane doubtfully supposed so.

Now the Lamb—whom I must try to remember to call St. Maur—was examining the lady's bicycle and talking to her with a very grown-up manner indeed. No one could possibly have supposed, to see and hear him, that only that very morning he had been a chubby child of less than two years breaking other people's Waterbury watches. Devereux (as he ought to be called for the future) took out a gold watch when he had mended the lady's bicycle, and all the on-lookers behind the pig-pail said "Oh!" because it seemed so unfair that the baby, who had only that morning destroyed two cheap, but honest, watches, should now, in the grown-upness Cyril's folly had raised him to, have a real gold watch, with a chain and seals!

Hilary (as I will now term him) withered his brothers and sisters with a glance, and then said to the lady, with whom he seemed to be quite friendly:—

"If you will allow me, I will ride with you as far as the cross-roads—it is getting late, and there are tramps about."

No one will ever know what answer the young lady intended to give to this gallant offer, for directly Anthea heard it made she rushed out, knocking over the pig-pail, which overflowed in a turbid stream, and caught the Lamb (I suppose I ought to say Hilary) by the arm. The others followed, and in an instant the four dirty children were visible beyond disguise.

"Don't let him," said Anthea to the lady, and she spoke with intense earnestness; "he's not fit to go with anyone!"

"Go away, little girl!" said St. Maur (as we will now call him), in a terrible voice. "Go home at once."

"You'd much better not have anything to do with him," the now reckless Anthea went on. "He doesn't know who he is. He's something very different from what you think he is."

"What do you mean?" asked the lady, not unnaturally; while Devereux (as I must term the grown-up Lamb) tried vainly to push Anthea away. The others backed her up and she stood solid as a rock.

"You just let him go with you," said Anthea, "you'll soon see what I mean! How would you like to suddenly see a poor little helpless baby spinning along downhill beside you with its feet up on a bicycle it had lost control of?"

The lady had turned rather pale.

"Who are these very dirty children?" she asked the grown-up Lamb (sometimes called St. Maur in these pages).

"I don't know," he lied, miserably.

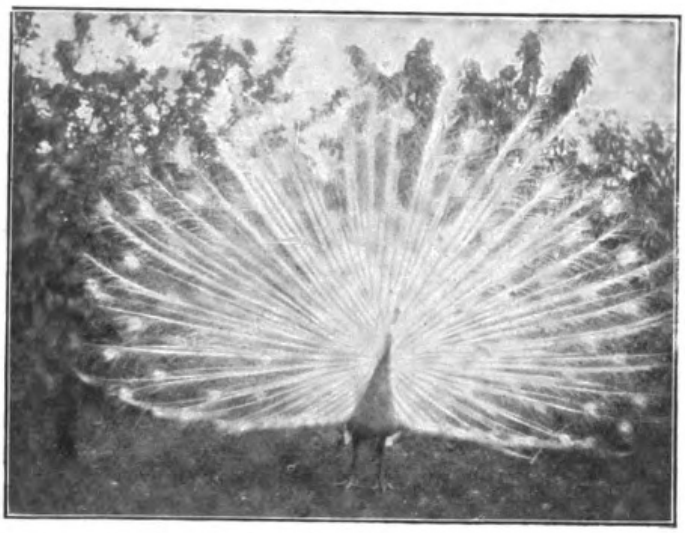
"Oh, Lamb! how *can* you," cried Jane, "when you know perfectly well you're our own little baby brother that we're so fond of? We're his big brothers and sisters," she explained, turning to the lady, who, with trembling hands, was now turning her bicycle towards the gate, "and we've got to take care of him. And we must get him home before sunset, or I don't know whatever will become of us. You see, he's sort of under a spell—enchanted; you know what I mean."

Again and again the Lamb (Devereux I mean) had tried to stop Jane's eloquence, but Robert and Cyril held him one by each leg, and no proper explanation was possible.

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*Curiosities.**

[*We shall be glad to receive Contributions to this section, and to pay for such as are accepted.*]

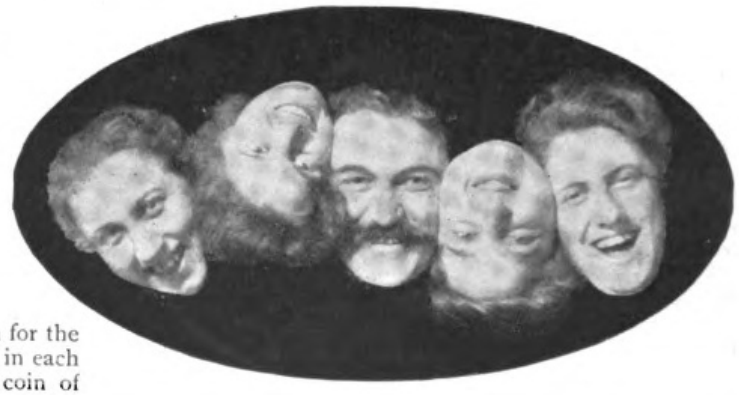


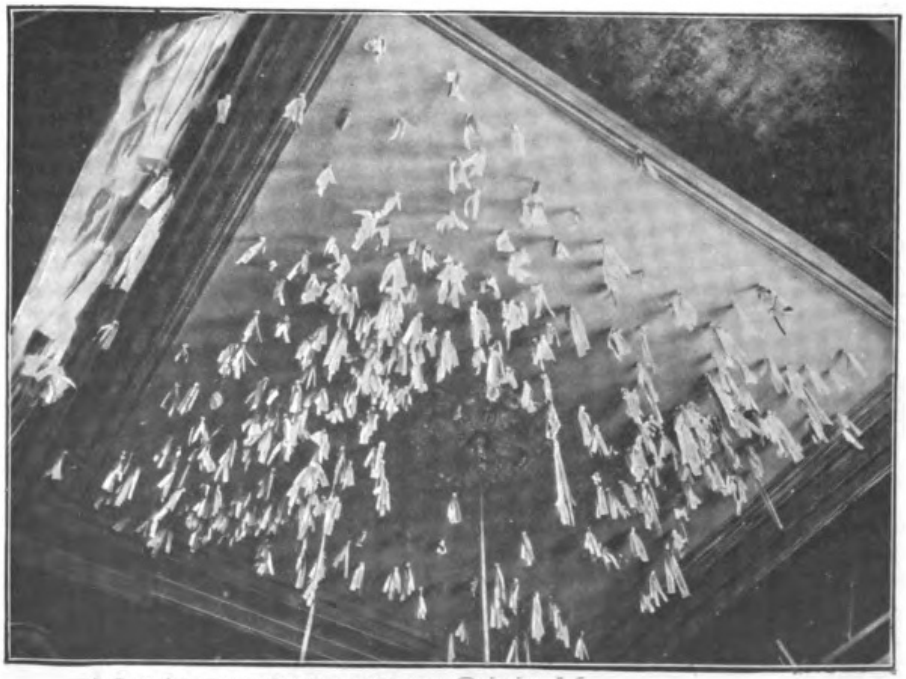
A WHITE PEACOCK'S TAIL.

"I send you a beautiful picture of a white peacock's tail, which I think may interest your readers. It was only after a week's patient daily waiting that I managed to secure it."—Mr. Thomas Cosano, 16, Bristo Place, Edinburgh.

A CURIOUS CORONATION COLLECTION.

"The accompanying photograph is that of a novel method of obtaining contributions to the Coronation collection for the London hospitals, there being enclosed in each of the pieces of paper on the ceiling a coin of the realm. The intending donor has to cut a piece of cardboard, about the size of a shilling, through the centre of which a tack is driven. Two or three strips of coloured paper are then pressed crossways on to the point of the tack, and allowed to hang down over the edge of the cardboard. A coin is placed under the piece of cardboard and the strips drawn over the edge and then twisted until the coin is held tight. The whole is then thrown point upwards to the ceiling, where it remains until removed by the collectors. In some of the papers shown in the illustration as many as twelve or thirteen pennies were placed, and in a small flag there were two half-crowns. The different coloured papers have quite a pretty effect. This collection was made at the Railway Hotel, Beckenham Road, Penge."—Mr. Cecil Zambra, photographer, 2, Lucas Road, Penge, S.E.





HE *DID* "LOOK PLEASANT."

"I submit to you a print from a flash-light negative that I obtained some time ago. It is an original idea, and the gentleman photographed suggested that I might as well have given a time exposure instead of taking the picture so rapidly. Perhaps some of your readers can follow his meaning! At all events, I am not quite sure that everyone could tell how the picture was taken."—Mr. Chas. H. L'Hommedieu, 319, Fifteenth Street, Buffalo.

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AN AWKWARD BRIDGE.

"Having seen a photo. of a 'Queer Bridge' in your 'Curiosity' page, I take the liberty of sending you a snap-shot taken last year, also on the Esk, and very probably the same bridge. The photographer in this case was sitting below the bridge, and this gives one the idea that the figure is suspended high up in the air."—Mr. M. F. Stuart, Lundie, Inchbare, Brechin.

TOSSING A "ROOKIE" IN A BLANKET.

A favourite amusement among the soldiers of the United States Army while in camp is blanket-tossing. A group of men stand round a blanket, holding it in as many places as possible. A recruit, or "rookie," is seized by some of the men, and, despite his struggles, is thrown into the blanket. The soldiers then toss him up as high into the air as possible, catching him in the outstretched blanket as he comes down. Occasionally, if the "rookie" manifests a marked dislike to the sport, he is allowed to fall to the ground, either through carelessness or intention, and then he is likely to be bruised, and may suffer serious injury. In the accompanying photograph the recruit is shown high in the air, and his slippers have fallen off from his bare feet. It was taken in the United States Military Reservation known as the Presidio, at San Francisco, and is forwarded by Mr. Arthur Inkersley, of San Francisco.



SMALLEST POST-OFFICE BUILDING IN THE WORLD.

"The post-office building at Virginia, California, has the distinction of being the smallest in the world. It is located upon the stage road running north from San Diego, and is far from any other building or habitation. Upon the days which bring the stage-coach past the tiny edifice, the postmaster comes to the road-side post-office and waits the coming of the mail. When they arrive the mail which has been deposited in the letter-drop by the five or six patrons of the office is exchanged for that which the stage has for the Virginia office, and it is distributed in the rude lock-boxes—the locks being padlocks—which have been attached to the building. These being accessible from the outside, the presence of the postmaster at times other than the coming of the mail is not essential."—Mr. Arthur J. Burdick, Box 577, Los Angeles, California.

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A TERRIER FOSTER-MOTHER.

"Mr. George Ullrich is the owner of a dog that is a most remarkable example of brute intelligence. Mr. Ullrich, who is a poultry raiser on a small scale, noticed, a few days ago, that one of his sitting hens was in the habit of frequently leaving her nest and remaining away for a long time. Fearing that he might lose a brood of chickens through the hen's neglect, he set about to make arrangements for keeping the eggs warm during her absence, and to that end decided to transfer the nest to the basement, alongside the furnace. Upon entering the hen-house, however, he discovered that his wishes had been anticipated by his pet dog, Princess, a female fox-terrier, which he found crouching on the eggs. He endeavoured to induce the animal to leave the nest, but she refused to do so until the hen returned to her duties. This state of affairs continued until the eggs were hatched. The moment the hen would leave the nest the dog would dash into the hen-house and 'sit' upon the eggs until the clucking biddy had finished her outing and was ready to assume her rightful place. As soon as the chicks were out of the shell, Princess asserted her right to share with the hen the care of the progeny."—Mr. John W. Hanson, Hammond, Ind.



WHAT ARE THESE?

"The curious objects shown in my photograph are not designs for trimming or patterns for ornamental work, but steel shavings caused by a Westinghouse break on a Great Eastern locomotive, on the ordinary steel rails of the line."—Mr. D. Graham, 95, Forburg Road, Stoke Newington.

A REMARKABLE RENTAL.

"Herewith a photograph of a very curious receipt, which has to be settled each year by the landlord of the inn mentioned. I cannot as yet ascertain the origin of this extraordinary document, which it would be interesting to learn. I also send a photograph of the Crown and Thistle Inn, which your readers will note is a quaint, old-fashioned place."—Mr. Chas. E. Clark, 27, Castle Street, Leicester.



No. 1

CORPORATION CHIEF AND FEE FARM RENTS.

Leicester, 22 July 1902

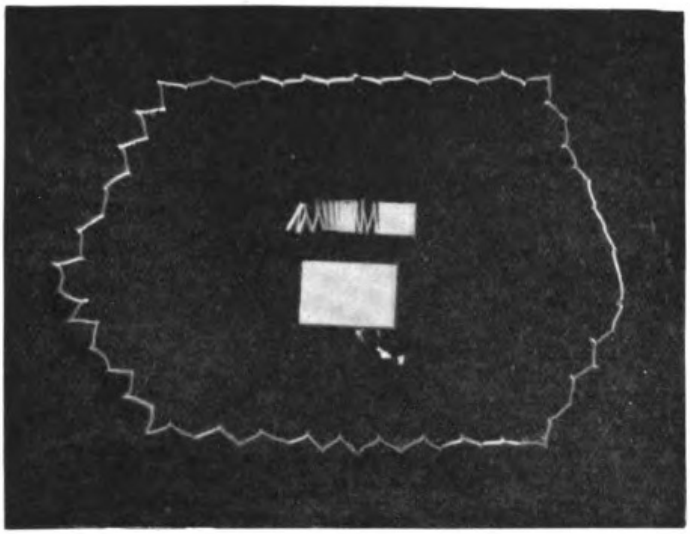
Received of Mr. Thr George Swift the sum of
Fourpence a damask Rose
for a Year's Rent due to the Leicester Corporation, at Michaelmas
1902, for Premises situate in Gravel Lane (Crown Thistle)

Rent
Arrs.
£ — 0 4

G. A. Harper
For Borough Treasurer.



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HOW TO STEP THROUGH A VISITING CARD.

"It sounds ridiculous to say that an ordinary visiting card may be so cut that a grown man or woman may step through it; but the enclosed photo. shows the method by which this seeming impossibility may be actually accomplished."—Mr. W. Dingwall Fordyce, 34, Great King Street, Edinburgh.



A FORTUNATE LITTLE LADY.

"I send you a photo. of myself in the play-room with some of my dolls. Please do not think that the picture represents my whole family of dolls, because about forty of them only appear in the photo., though I have nearly eighty. I wonder if any of your other girl readers can boast of so large a collection? My brother arranged the dolls round me and then he took the photo."—Miss B. Priest, 246, Bristol Road, Edgbaston, Birmingham.

AN EXTRAORDINARY ILLUSION.

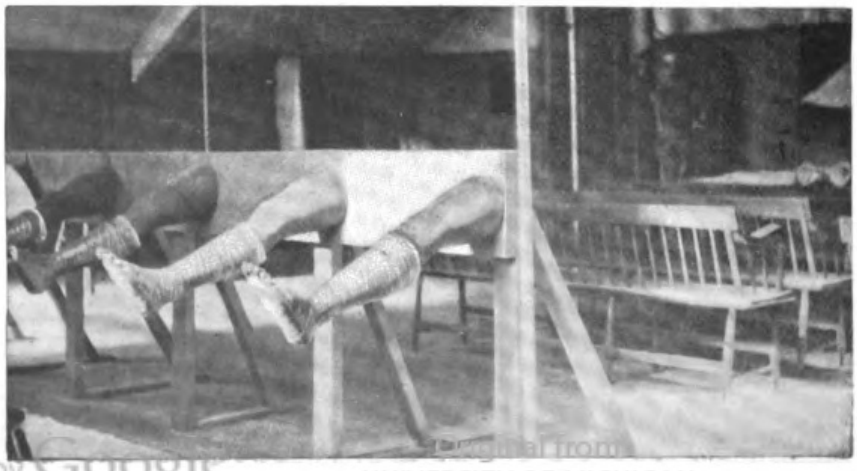
"I enclose a photograph which represents Private H. P. Lee, 37th Squadron, 10th Battalion Imperial Yeomanry, cooking our dinner in South Africa. You will



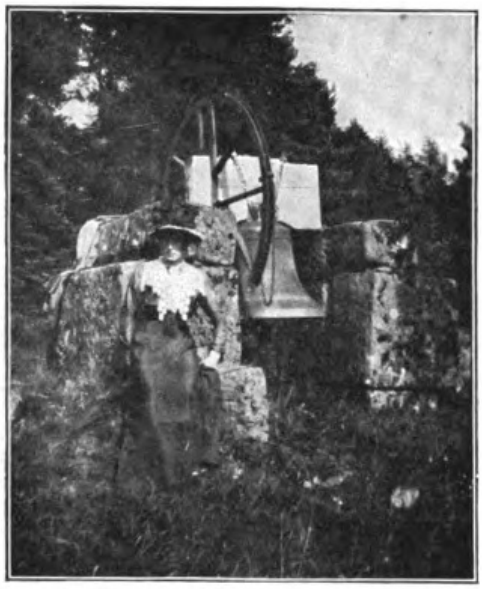
see that there is a complete face in his hat."—Mr. Norman M. Lawrance, 14, Alexandra Road, Bedford.

A CURIOSITY IN A MEDICAL SCHOOL.

"This somewhat weird-looking photograph need not alarm any of your readers. The lower limbs represented in the picture are purely artificial, though they are beautifully modelled to represent the actual limbs of a human being. The reason for this will be easily understood when it is mentioned that the students of Harvard Medical School are taught how to bandage these wooden models before they are allowed to dress the damaged limbs of real patients."—Mr. Allen H. Blacke, 18, Prentiss Street, N. Cambridge, Mass.



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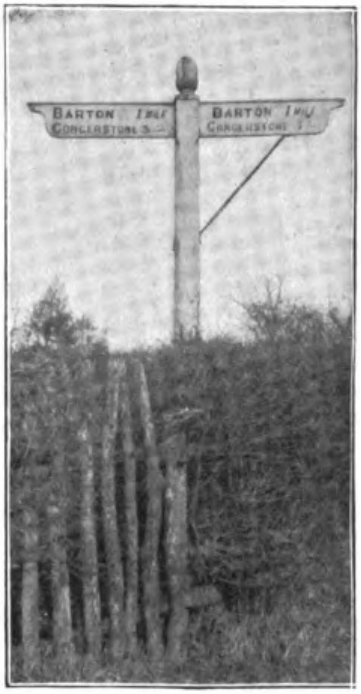


A QUAINT CHURCH BELL.

"The huge bell shown in my photograph is to be found in a small churchyard in Glen Finnan, Inverness-shire. It takes the place of a church bell, as there is no belfry to the building. An inscription in Latin is written around it, the interpretation of which is as follows: 'O, all ye hills and valleys, praise ye the Lord,' which seems a most appropriate one, the bell being situated among the most lovely mountains and glens of Scotland."—Mr. D. J. Unwin, Dowdeswell Court, Andoversford, R.S.O.

A PUZZLING SIGN-POST.

"This is not a 'freak photo.,' but a photograph of a sign-post in the village of Nailstone, near Market Bosworth, Leicestershire. The Barton is Barton-in-Beans, and Congerstone, three miles, is near Gopshall Hall, the country seat of Earl Howe. It is quite correct, as both roads, though going in exactly opposite directions, eventually meet on the outskirts of the village, but the wording is very puzzling to a stranger." — Mr. A. D. Taylor, 4, William Street, Attleborough, Nuneaton.



A DIAMOND EAR-RING ON EVERY NAIL.

This is the hand of Titenia, a variety actress on the American stage, who has devised a new way of wearing jewels. Not only does she adorn herself with bracelets, a thumb-ring, and rings on three of her fingers, but she also has a big jewel moored by chains to the middle of the back of her hand and a diamond ear-ring hanging from every nail. Each finger-nail is allowed to grow long, and is then bored with a little round hole, into which is inserted a diamond ear-ring. The effect is startling. The photograph is by Joseph Hall, of Broadway, New York, and is forwarded by Mr. Arthur Inkersley, of San Francisco.



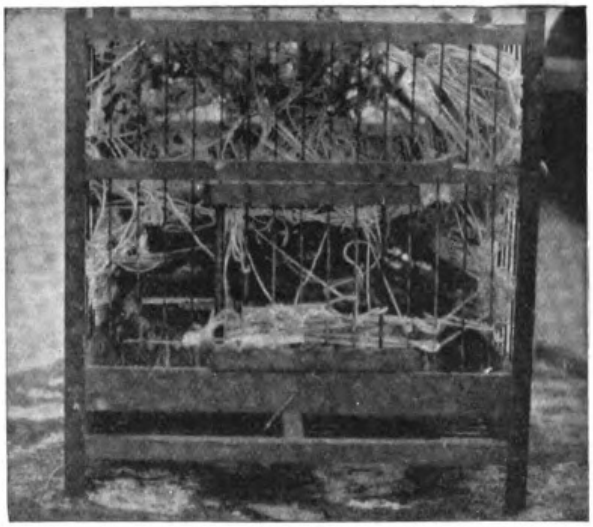
SOMETHING NEW IN DOLLS.

Mrs. Scott Cooper, of 605, N. San Joaquin Street, Stockton, Cal., has evolved something distinctly original and extremely novel in the way of dolls. Three samples of her work are shown herewith. The heads are carved from oak-balls with a common jack-knife, and Mrs. Cooper has shown a remarkable talent for that class of work. The lady, who is quite well known on the American stage, has a great deal of artistic talent, tending mostly towards modelling and carving. The eyebrows of these dolls are made of hair from a clothes-brush, as are also their other hirsute adornments. The ears are made of separate oak-balls, pasted on with putty.



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A WEAVER BIRD.



"I am sending you a photograph of a cage in which is kept a red-billed weaver bird, a native of Central Africa. It has been kept and domesticated by Miss Lydia Matthews, 19, Sarton Street, Wandsworth. By some means or other it recently secured the end of a ball of knitting cotton, dragged it into its cage, and wove several apartments for itself. It has filled one cage and is now busy with another. It is a matter of difficulty to show in a photograph how distinct from each other the various compartments really are, and how cleverly the various partitions are fashioned."—Miss N. Carter, 38, Belle Vue Gardens, Allfarthing Lane, Wandsworth.

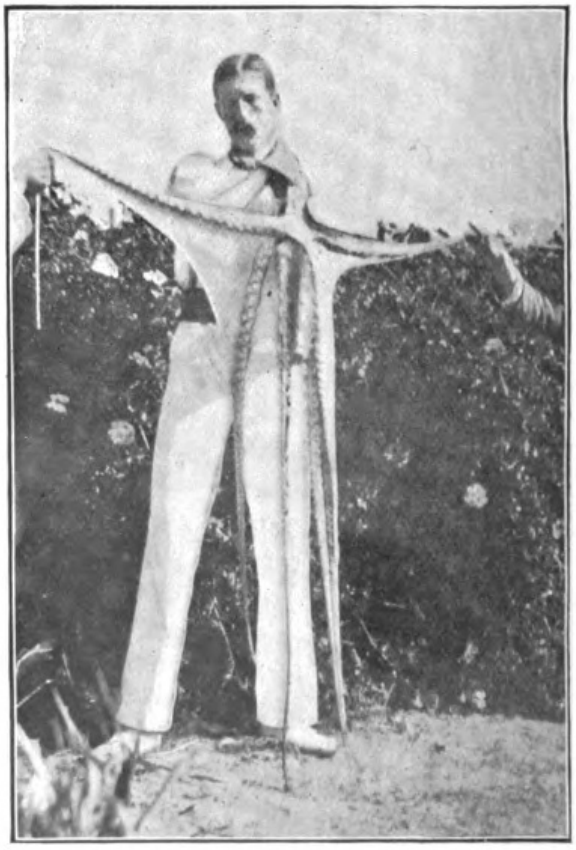


"THE CHAINED CEDAR."

"I forward you a photograph, taken by myself, of a tree in Bretby Park, the property of the Earl of Carnarvon. It is known as 'The Chained Cedar,' and the legend attached to it is that when one of the branches falls off a member of the family dies immediately afterwards; and as this has often occurred, the branches are now supported by chains, which may just be distinguished in the photograph." — Mr. Raymond Nadin, 20, Ashby Road, Burton-on-Trent.

CAPTURING AN OCTOPUS.

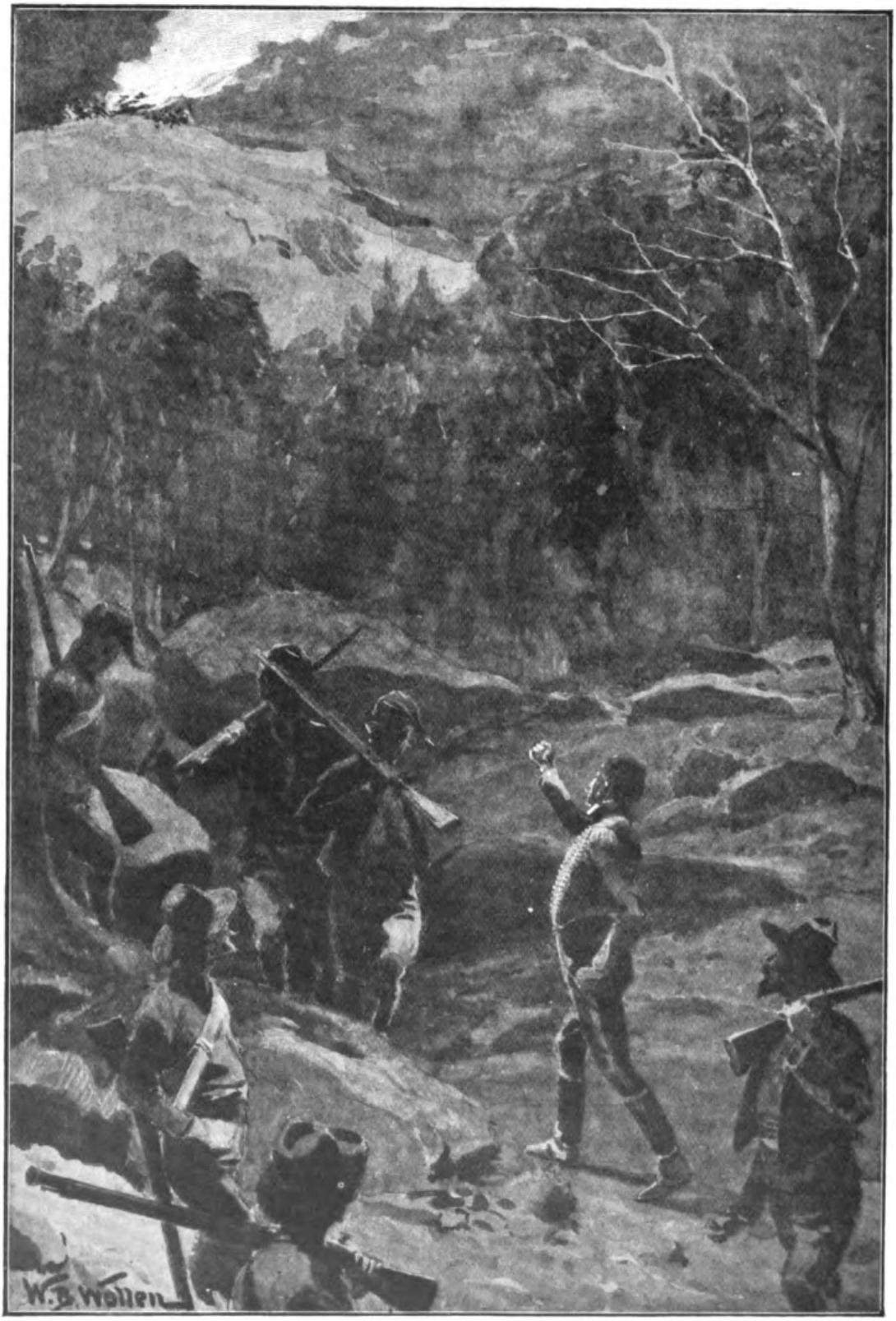
"I enclose the snapshot of an octopus caught by myself and friend last May in Western Australia, also an account of the same, which is taken from the *Norseman Times*, which says: 'Some excitement has been caused by the capture of a large octopus by Messrs. A. S. Faulkner and J. B. Teede. It appears that they were bathing, as usual, off Dempster's jetty before breakfast, when suddenly they saw a huge octopus making for them. Swimming for their lives they first managed to reach the jetty before the octopus, the powerful tentacles sweeping the steps which they but a second before had left. Mr. Teede went along the beach, followed by the huge creature in shallow water, while Mr. Faulkner rushed into the sea and attacked it with an oar. Between them it was eventually overpowered and secured. It was found to measure 10ft. across. Even when dying the large tentacles held tenaciously to any object within reach. No one here had ever seen such a huge



octopus before. Photographers availed themselves of the opportunity to secure prints of this unique catch.'"—Mr. A. S. Faulkner, Wood Lodge, Prees, Salop.

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"WE COULD SEE THAT IMPASSIVE BODY AMID THE FLAMES, AND THE BLACK FIGURES AS THEY DANCED ROUND THE PILE."

(*See page* 495.)

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THE STRAND MAGAZINE.

Vol. xxiv. NOVEMBER, 1902. No. 143.

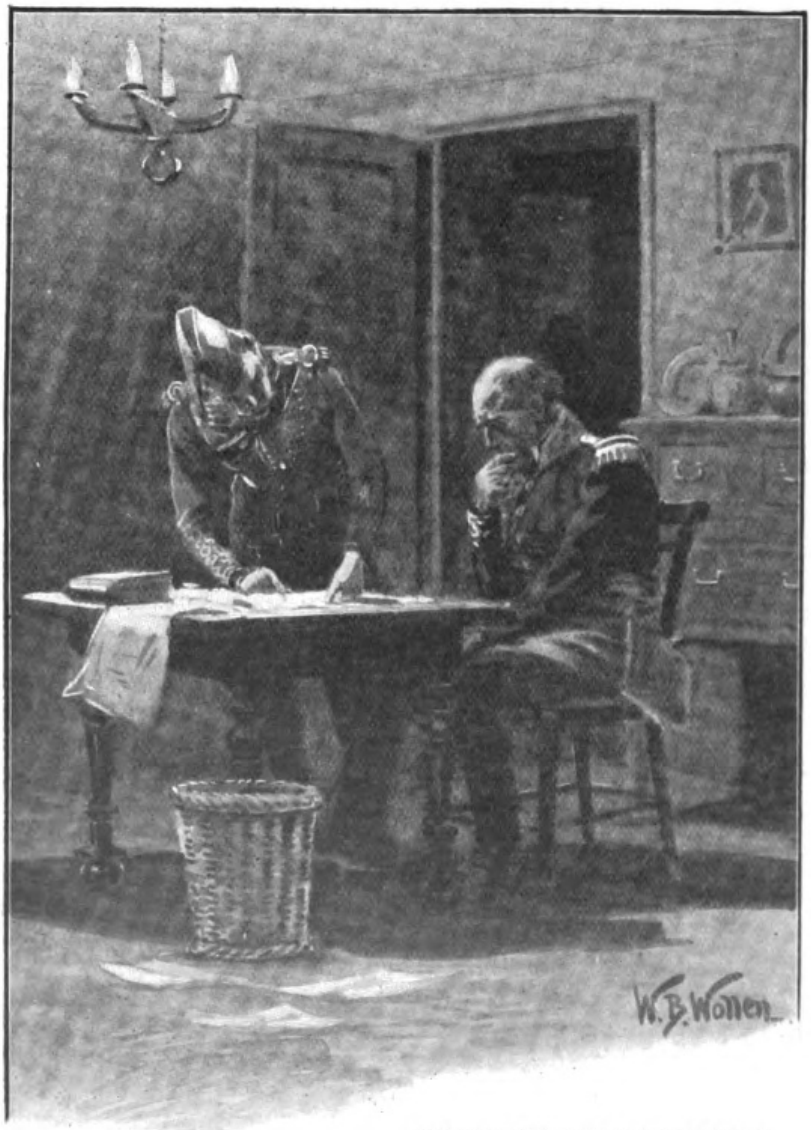
The Adventures of Etienne Gerard.

By A. Conan Doyle.

II.—HOW THE BRIGADIER SAVED THE ARMY.

I HAVE told you, my friends, how we held the English shut up for six months, from October, 1810, to March, 1811, within their lines of Torres Vedras. It was during this time that I hunted the fox in their company, and showed them that amidst all their sportsmen there was not one who could outride a Hussar of Conflans. When I galloped back into the French lines with the blood of the creature still moist upon my blade the outposts who had seen what I had done raised a frenzied cry in my honour, whilst these English hunters still yelled behind me, so that I had the applause of both armies. It made the tears rise to my eyes to feel that I had won the admiration of so many brave men. These English are generous foes. That very evening there came a packet under a white flag addressed "To the Hussar officer who cut down the fox." Within I found the fox itself in two pieces, as I had left it. There was a note also, short but hearty as the English fashion is, to say that as I had slaughtered the fox it only remained for me to eat it. They could not know that it was not our French custom to eat foxes, and it showed their desire that he who had won the honours of the chase should also partake of the game. It is not for a Frenchman to be outdone in politeness, and so I returned it to these brave hunters, and begged them to accept it as a side-dish for their next *déjeuner de la chasse.* It is thus that chivalrous opponents make war.

I had brought back with me from my ride a clear plan of the English lines, and this I laid before Massena that very evening.



"THIS PLAN I LAID BEFORE MASSENA THAT VERY EVENING."

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I had hoped that it would lead him to attack, but all the marshals were at each other's throats, snapping and growling like so many hungry hounds. Ney hated Massena, and Massena hated Junot, and Soult hated them all. For this reason nothing was done. In the meantime food grew more and more scarce, and our beautiful cavalry was ruined for want of fodder. With the end of the winter we had swept the whole country bare, and nothing remained for us to eat, although we sent our forage parties far and wide. It was clear even to the bravest of us that the time had come to retreat. I was myself forced to admit it.

But retreat was not so easy. Not only were the troops weak and exhausted from want of supplies, but the enemy had been much encouraged by our long inaction. Of Wellington we had no great fear. We had found him to be brave and cautious, but with little enterprise. Besides, in that barren country his pursuit could not be rapid. But on our flanks and in our rear there had gathered great numbers of Portuguese militia, of armed peasants, and of guerillas. These people had kept a safe distance all the winter, but now that our horses were foundered they were as thick as flies all round our outposts, and no man's life was worth a sou when once he fell into their hands. I could name a dozen officers of my own acquaintance who were cut off during that time, and the luckiest was he who received a ball from behind a rock through his head or his heart. There were some whose deaths were so terrible that no report of them was ever allowed to reach their relatives. So frequent were these tragedies, and so much did they impress the imagination of the men, that it became very difficult to induce them to leave the camp. There was one especial scoundrel, a guerilla chief named Manuelo, "The Smiler," whose exploits filled our men with horror. He was a large, fat man of jovial aspect, and he lurked with a fierce gang among the mountains which lay upon our left flank. A volume might be written of this fellow's cruelties and brutalities, but he was certainly a man of power, for he organized his brigands in a manner which made it almost impossible for us to get through his country. This he did by imposing a severe discipline upon them and enforcing it by cruel penalties, a policy by which he made them formidable, but which had some unexpected results, as I will show you in my story. Had he not flogged his own lieutenant——but you will hear of that when the time comes.

There were many difficulties in connection with a retreat, but it was very evident that there was no other possible course, and so Massena began to quickly pass his baggage and his sick from Torres Novas, which was his head-quarters, to Coimbra, the first strong post on his line of communications. He could not do this unperceived, however, and at once the guerillas came swarming closer and closer upon our flanks. One of our divisions, that of Clausel, with a brigade of Montbrun's cavalry, was far to the south of the Tagus, and it became very necessary to let them know that we were about to retreat, for otherwise they would be left unsupported in the very heart of the enemy's country. I remember wondering how Massena would accomplish this, for simple couriers could not get through, and small parties would be certainly destroyed. In some way an order to fall back must be conveyed to these men, or France would be the weaker by fourteen thousand men. Little did I think that it was I, Colonel Gerard, who was to have the honour of a deed which might have formed the crowning glory of any other man's life, and which stands high among those exploits which have made my own so famous.

At that time I was serving on Massena's staff, and he had two other aides-de-camp, who were also very brave and intelligent officers. The name of one was Cortex and of the other Duplessis. They were senior to me in age, but junior in every other respect. Cortex was a small, dark man, very quick and eager. He was a fine soldier, but he was ruined by his conceit. To take him at his own valuation he was the first man in the army. Duplessis was a Gascon, like myself, and he was a very fine fellow, as all Gascon gentlemen are. We took it in turn, day about, to do duty, and it was Cortex who was in attendance upon the morning of which I speak. I saw him at breakfast, but afterwards neither he nor his horse was to be seen. All day Massena was in his usual gloom, and he spent much of his time staring with his telescope at the English lines and at the shipping in the Tagus. He said nothing of the mission upon which he had sent our comrade, and it was not for us to ask him any questions.

That night, about twelve o'clock, I was standing outside the Marshal's head-quarters when he came out and stood motionless for half an hour, his arms folded upon his breast, staring through the darkness towards the east.

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So rigid and intent was he that you might have believed the muffled figure and the cocked hat to have been the statue of the man. What he was looking for I could not imagine; but at last he gave a bitter curse, and, turning on his heel, he went back into the house, banging the door behind him.

Next day the second aide-de-camp, Duplessis, had an interview with Massena in the morning, after which neither he nor his horse was seen again. That night, as I sat in the ante-room, the Marshal passed me, and I observed him through the window standing and staring to the east exactly as he had done before. For fully half an hour he remained there, a black shadow in the gloom. Then he strode in, the door banged, and I heard his spurs and his scabbard jingling and clanking through the passage. At the best he was a savage old man, but when he was crossed I had almost as soon face the Emperor himself. I heard him that night cursing and stamping above my head, but he did not send for me, and I knew him too well to go unsought.

Next morning it was my turn, for I was the only aide-de-camp left. I was his favourite aide-de-camp. His heart went out always to a smart soldier. I declare that I think there were tears in his black eyes when he sent for me that morning.

"Gerard!" said he. "Come here!"

With a friendly gesture he took me by the sleeve and he led me to the open window which faced the east. Beneath us was the infantry camp, and beyond that the lines of the cavalry with the long rows of picketed horses. We could see the French outposts, and then a stretch of open country, intersected by vineyards. A range of hills lay beyond, with one well-marked peak towering above them. Round the base of these hills was a broad belt of forest. A single road ran white and clear, dipping and rising until it passed through a gap in the hills.

"This," said Massena, pointing to the mountain, "is the Sierra de Merodal. Do you perceive anything upon the top?"

I answered that I did not.

"Now?" he asked, and he handed me his field-glass.

With its aid I perceived a small mound or cairn upon the crest.

"What you see," said the Marshal, "is a pile of logs which was placed there as a beacon. We laid it when the country was in our hands, and now, although we no longer hold it, the beacon remains undisturbed. Gerard, that beacon must be lit to-night. France needs it, the Emperor needs it, the army needs it. Two of your comrades have gone to light it, but neither has made his way to the summit. To-day it is your turn, and I pray that you may have better luck."

It is not for a soldier to ask the reason for his orders, and so I was about to hurry from the room, but the Marshal laid his hand upon my shoulder and held me.

"You shall know all, and so learn how high is the cause for which you risk your life," said he. "Fifty miles to the south of



"GERARD, THAT BEACON MUST BE LIT TO-NIGHT."

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us, on the other side of the Tagus, is the army of General Clausel. His camp is situated near a peak named the Sierra d'Ossa. On the summit of this peak is a beacon, and by this beacon he has a picket. It is agreed between us that when at midnight he shall see our signal fire he shall light his own as an answer, and shall then at once fall back upon the main army. If he does not start at once I must go without him. For two days I have endeavoured to send him his message. It must reach him to-day, or his army will be left behind and destroyed."

Ah, my friends, how my heart swelled when I heard how high was the task which Fortune had assigned to me! If my life were spared, here was one more splendid new leaf for my laurel crown. If, on the other hand, I died, then it would be a death worthy of such a career. I said nothing, but I cannot doubt that all the noble thoughts that were in me shone in my face, for Massena took my hand and wrung it.

"There is the hill and there the beacon," said he. "There is only this guerilla and his men between you and it. I cannot detach a large party for the enterprise and a small one would be seen and destroyed. Therefore to you alone I commit it. Carry it out in your own way, but at twelve o'clock this night let me see the fire upon the hill."

"If it is not there," said I, "then I pray you, Marshal Massena, to see that my effects are sold and the money sent to my mother." So I raised my hand to my busby and turned upon my heel, my heart glowing at the thought of the great exploit which lay before me.

I sat in my own chamber for some little time considering how I had best take the matter in hand. The fact that neither Cortex nor Duplessis, who were very zealous and active officers, had succeeded in reaching the summit of the Sierra de Merodal showed that the country was very closely watched by the guerillas. I reckoned out the distance upon a map. There were ten miles of open country to be crossed before reaching the hills. Then came a belt of forest on the lower slopes of the mountain, which may have been three or four miles wide. And then there was the actual peak itself, of no very great height, but without any cover to conceal me. Those were the three stages of my journey.

It seemed to me that once I had reached the shelter of the wood all would be easy, for I could lie concealed within its shadows and climb upwards under the cover of night. From eight till twelve would give me four hours of darkness in which to make the ascent. It was only the first stage, then, which I had seriously to consider.

Over that flat country there lay the inviting white road, and I remembered that my comrades had both taken their horses. That was clearly their ruin, for nothing could be easier than for the brigands to keep watch upon the road, and to lay an ambush for all who passed along it. It would not be difficult for me to ride across country, and I was well horsed at that time, for I had not only Violette and Rataplan, who were two of the finest mounts in the army, but I had the splendid black English hunter which I had taken from Sir Cotton. However, after much thought, I determined to go upon foot, since I should then be in a better state to take advantage of any chance which might offer. As to my dress, I covered my Hussar uniform with a long cloak, and I put a grey forage cap upon my head. You may ask me why I did not dress as a peasant, but I answer that a man of honour has no desire to die the death of a spy. It is one thing to be murdered, and it is another to be justly executed by the laws of war. I would not run the risk of such an end.

In the late afternoon I stole out of the camp and passed through the line of our pickets. Beneath my cloak I had a field-glass and a pocket pistol, as well as my sword. In my pocket were tinder, flint, and steel.

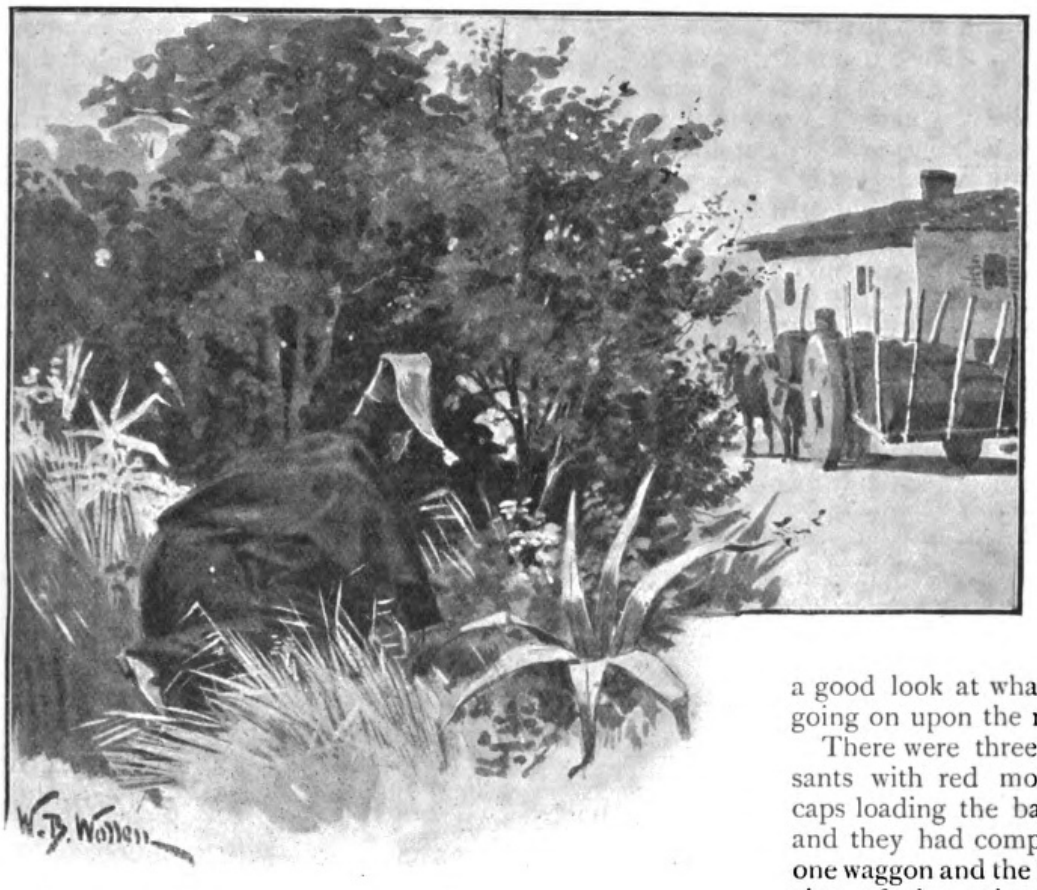
For two or three miles I kept under cover of the vineyards, and made such good progress that my heart was high within me, and I thought to myself that it only needed a man of some brains to take the matter in hand to bring it easily to success. Of course, Cortex and Duplessis galloping down the high road would be easily seen, but the intelligent Gerard lurking among the vines was quite another person. I dare say I had got as far as five miles before I met any check. At that point there is a small wine-house, round which I perceived some carts and a number of people, the first that I had seen. Now that I was well outside the lines I knew that every person was my enemy, so I crouched lower while I stole along to a point from which I could get a better view of what was going on. I then perceived that these people were peasants, who were loading two waggons with empty wine-casks. I failed to see how they could either help or hinder me, so I continued upon my way.

But soon I understood that my task was

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not so simple as had appeared. As the ground rose the vineyards ceased, and I came upon a stretch of open country studded with low hills. Crouching in a ditch I examined them with a glass, and I very soon perceived that there was a watcher upon every one of them, and that these people had a line of pickets and outposts thrown forward exactly like our own. I had heard of the discipline which was practised by this scoundrel whom they called "The Smiler," and this, no doubt, was an example of it. Between the hills there was a cordon of sentries, and though I worked some distance round to the flank I still found myself faced by the enemy. It was a puzzle what to do. There was so little cover that a rat could hardly cross without being seen. Of course, it would be easy enough to slip through at night, as I had done with the English at Torres Vedras, but I was still far from the mountain and I could not in that case reach it in time to light the midnight beacon. I lay in my ditch and I made a thousand plans, each more dangerous than the last. And then suddenly I had that flash of light which comes to the brave man who refuses to despair.

You remember I have mentioned that two waggons were loading up with empty casks at the inn. The heads of the oxen were turned to the east, and it was evident that those waggons were going in the direction which I desired. Could I only conceal myself upon one of them, what better and easier way could I find of passing through the lines of the guerillas? So simple and so good was the plan that I could not restrain a cry of delight as it crossed my mind, and I hurried away instantly in the direction of the inn. There, from behind some bushes, I had a good look at what was going on upon the road.



"FROM BEHIND SOME BUSHES I HAD A GOOD LOOK AT WHAT WAS GOING ON."

There were three peasants with red montero caps loading the barrels, and they had completed one waggon and the lower tier of the other. A number of empty barrels still lay outside the wine-house waiting to be put on. Fortune was my friend—I have always said that she is a woman and cannot resist a dashing young Hussar. As I watched, the three fellows went into the inn, for the day was hot and they were thirsty after their labour. Quick as a flash I darted out from my hiding-place, climbed on to the waggon, and crept into one of the empty casks. It had a bottom but no top, and it lay upon its side with the open end inwards. There I crouched like a dog in its kennel, my knees

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drawn up to my chin, for the barrels were not very large and I am a well-grown man. As I lay there out came the three peasants again, and presently I heard a crash upon the top of me which told that I had another barrel above me. They piled them upon the cart until I could not imagine how I was ever to get out again. However, it is time to think of crossing the Vistula when you are over the Rhine, and I had no doubt that if chance and my own wits had carried me so far they would carry me farther.

Soon, when the waggon was full, they set forth upon their way, and I within my barrel chuckled at every step, for it was carrying me whither I wished to go. We travelled slowly, and the peasants walked beside the waggons. This I knew, because I heard their voices close to me. They seemed to me to be very merry fellows, for they laughed heartily as they went. What the joke was I could not understand. Though I speak their language fairly well I could not hear anything comic in the scraps of their conversation which met my ear.

I reckoned that at the rate of walking of a team of oxen we covered about two miles an hour. Therefore, when I was sure that two and a half hours had passed—such hours, my friends, cramped, suffocated, and nearly poisoned with the fumes of the lees—when they had passed, I was sure that the dangerous open country was behind us, and that we were upon the edge of the forest and the mountain. So now I had to turn my mind upon how I was to get out of my barrel. I had thought of several ways, and was balancing one against the other when the question was decided for me in a very simple but unexpected manner.

The waggon stopped suddenly with a jerk, and I heard a number of gruff voices in excited talk. "Where, where?" cried one. "On our cart," said another. "Who is he?" said a third. "A French officer; I saw his cap and his boots." They all roared with laughter. "I was looking out of the window of the posada and I saw him spring into the cask like a toreador with a Seville bull at his heels." "Which cask, then?" "It was this one," said the fellow, and sure enough his fist struck the wood beside my head.

What a situation, my friends, for a man of my standing! I blush now, after forty years, when I think of it. To be trussed like a fowl and to listen helplessly to the rude laughter of these boors—to know, too, that my mission had come to an ignominious and even ridiculous end—I would have blessed the man who would have sent a bullet through the cask and freed me from my misery.

I heard the crashing of the barrels as they hurled them off the waggon, and then a couple of bearded faces and the muzzles of two guns looked in at me. They seized me by the sleeves of my coat, and they dragged me out into the daylight. A strange figure I must have looked as I stood blinking and gaping in the blinding sunlight. My body was bent like a cripple's, for I could not straighten my stiff joints, and half my coat was as red as an English soldier's from the lees in which I had lain. They laughed and laughed, these dogs, and as I tried to express by my bearing and gestures the contempt in which I held them their laughter grew all the louder. But even in these hard circumstances I bore myself like the man I am, and as I cast my eye slowly round I did not find that any of the laughers were very ready to face it.

That one glance round was enough to tell me exactly how I was situated. I had been betrayed by these peasants into the hands of an outpost of guerillas. There were eight of them, savage-looking, hairy creatures, with cotton handkerchiefs under their sombreros, and many-buttoned jackets with coloured sashes round the waist. Each had a gun and one or two pistols stuck in his girdle. The leader, a great bearded ruffian, held his gun against my ear while the others searched my pockets, taking from me my overcoat, my pistol, my glass, my sword, and, worst of all, my flint and steel and tinder. Come what might I was ruined, for I had no longer the means of lighting the beacon even if I should reach it.

Eight of them, my friends, with three peasants, and I unarmed! Was Etienne Gerard in despair? Did he lose his wits? Ah, you know me too well; but they did not know me yet, these dogs of brigands. Never have I made so supreme and astounding an effort as at this very instant when all seemed lost. Yet you might guess many times before you would hit upon the device by which I escaped them. Listen and I will tell you.

They had dragged me from the waggon when they searched me, and I stood, still twisted and warped, in the midst of them. But the stiffness was wearing off, and already my mind was very actively looking out for some method of breaking away. It was a narrow pass in which the brigands had their outpost. It was bounded on the one hand by a steep mountain side. On the other the ground fell away in a very long slope, which

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ended in a bushy valley many hundreds of feet below. These fellows, you understand, were hardy mountaineers, who could travel either up hill or down very much quicker than I. They wore abarcas, or shoes of skin, tied on like sandals, which gave them a foothold everywhere. A less resolute man would have despaired. But in an instant I saw and used the strange chance which Fortune had placed in my way. On the very edge of the slope was one of the wine-barrels. I moved slowly towards it, and then with a tiger spring I dived into it feet foremost, and with a roll of my body I tipped it over the side of the hill.

Shall I ever forget that dreadful journey —how I bounded and crashed and whizzed down that terrible slope? I had dug in my knees and elbows, bunching my body into a compact bundle so as to steady it; but my head projected from the end, and it was a marvel that I did not dash out my brains. There were long, smooth slopes, and then came steeper scarps where the barrel ceased to roll, and sprang into the air like a goat, coming down with a rattle and crash which jarred every bone in my body. How the wind whistled in my ears, and my head turned and turned until I was sick and giddy and nearly senseless! Then, with a swish and a great rasping and crackling of branches, I reached the bushes which I had seen so far below me. Through them I broke my way, down a slope beyond, and deep into another patch of underwood, where striking a sapling my barrel flew to pieces. From amid a heap of staves and hoops I crawled out, my body aching in every inch of it, but my heart singing loudly with joy and my spirit high within me, for I knew how great was the feat which I had accomplished, and I already seemed to see the beacon blazing on the hill.

A horrible nausea had seized me from the tossing which I had undergone, and I felt as I did upon the ocean when first I experienced those movements of which the English have taken so perfidious an advantage. I had to sit for a few moments with my head upon my hands beside the ruins of my barrel. But there was no time for rest. Already I heard shouts above me which told that my pursuers were descending the hill. I dashed into the thickest part of the underwood, and I ran and ran until I was utterly exhausted. Then I lay panting and listened with all my ears, but no sound came to them. I had shaken off my enemies.

When I had recovered my breath I travelled swiftly on, and waded knee-deep through several brooks, for it came into my head that they might follow me with dogs. On gaining a clear place and looking round me, I found to my delight that in spite of my adventures I had not been much out of my way. Above me towered the peak of Merodal, with its bare and bold summit shooting out of the groves of dwarf oaks which shrouded its flanks. These groves were the continuation of the cover under which I found myself, and it seemed to me that I had nothing to fear now until I reached the



"IT WAS DUPLESSIS."

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other side of the forest. At the same time I knew that every man's hand was against me, that I was unarmed, and that there were many people about me. I saw no one, but several times I heard shrill whistles, and once the sound of a gun in the distance.

It was hard work pushing one's way through the bushes, and so I was glad when I came to the larger trees and found a path which led between them. Of course, I was too wise to walk upon it, but I kept near it and followed its course. I had gone some distance, and had, as I imagined, nearly reached the limit of the wood, when a strange, moaning sound fell upon my ears. At first I thought it was the cry of some animal, but then there came words, of which I only caught the French exclamation, "Mon Dieu!" With great caution I advanced in the direction from which the sound proceeded, and this is what I saw.

On a couch of dried leaves there was stretched a man dressed in the same grey uniform which I wore myself. He was evidently horribly wounded, for he held a cloth to his breast which was crimson with his blood. A pool had formed all round his couch, and he lay in a haze of flies, whose buzzing and droning would certainly have called my attention if his groans had not come to my ear. I lay for a moment, fearing some trap, and then, my pity and loyalty rising above all other feelings, I ran forward and knelt by his side. He turned a haggard face upon me, and it was Duplessis, the man who had gone before me. It needed but one glance at his sunken cheeks and glazing eyes to tell me that he was dying.

"Gerard!" said he; "Gerard!"

I could but look my sympathy, but he, though the life was ebbing swiftly out of him, still kept his duty before him, like the gallant gentleman he was.

"The beacon, Gerard! You will light it?"

"Have you flint and steel?"

"It is here."

"Then I will light it to-night."

"I die happy to hear you say so. They shot me, Gerard. But you will tell the Marshal that I did my best."

"And Cortex?"

"He was less fortunate. He fell into their hands and died horribly. If you see that you cannot get away, Gerard, put a bullet into your own heart. Don't die as Cortex did."

I could see that his breath was failing, and I bent low to catch his words.

"Can you tell me anything which can help me in my task?" I asked.

"Yes, yes; De Pombal. He will help you. Trust De Pombal." With the words his head fell back and he was dead.

"Trust De Pombal. It is good advice." To my amazement a man was standing at the very side of me. So absorbed had I been in my comrade's words and intent on his advice that he had crept up without my observing him. Now I sprang to my feet and faced him. He was a tall, dark fellow, black-haired, black-eyed, black-bearded, with a long, sad face. In his hand he had a wine-bottle and over his shoulder was slung one of the trabucos or blunderbusses which these fellows bear. He made no effort to unsling it, and I understood that this was the man to whom my dead friend had commended me.

"Alas, he is gone!" said he, bending over Duplessis. "He fled into the wood after he was shot, but I was fortunate enough to find where he had fallen and to make his last hours more easy. This couch was my making, and I had brought this wine to slake his thirst."

"Sir," said I, "in the name of France I thank you. I am but a colonel of light cavalry, but I am Etienne Gerard, and the name stands for something in the French army. May I ask——"

"Yes, sir, I am Aloysius de Pombal, younger brother of the famous nobleman of that name. At present I am the first lieutenant in the band of the guerilla chief who is usually known as Manuelo, 'The Smiler.'"

My word, I clapped my hand to the place where my pistol should have been, but the man only smiled at the gesture.

"I am his first lieutenant, but I am also his deadly enemy," said he. He slipped off his jacket and pulled up his shirt as he spoke. "Look at this!" he cried, and he turned upon me a back which was all scored and lacerated with red and purple weals. "This is what 'The Smiler' has done to me, a man with the noblest blood of Portugal in my veins. What I will do to 'The Smiler' you have still to see."

There was such fury in his eyes and in the grin of his white teeth that I could no longer doubt his truth, with that clotted and oozing back to corroborate his words.

"I have ten men sworn to stand by me," said he. "In a few days I hope to join your army, when I have done my work here. In the meanwhile——." A strange change

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came over his face, and he suddenly slung his musket to the front: "Hold up your hands, you French hound!" he yelled. "Up with them, or I blow your head off!"



"'HOLD UP YOUR HANDS, YOU FRENCH HOUND!' HE YELLED."

You start, my friends! You stare! Think, then, how I stared and started at this sudden ending of our talk. There was the black muzzle and there the dark, angry eyes behind it. What could I do? I was helpless. I raised my hands in the air. At the same moment voices sounded from all parts of the wood, there were crying and calling and rushing of many feet. A swarm of dreadful figures broke through the green bushes, a dozen hands seized me, and I, poor, luckless, frenzied I, was a prisoner once more. Thank God, there was no pistol which I could have plucked from my belt and snapped at my own head. Had I been armed at that moment I should not be sitting here in this café and telling you these old-world tales.

With grimy, hairy hands clutching me on every side I was led along the pathway through the wood, the villain De Pombal giving directions to my captors. Four of the brigands carried up the dead body of Duplessis. The shadows of evening were already falling when we cleared the forest and came out upon the mountain-side. Up this I was driven until we reached the headquarters of the guerillas, which lay in a cleft close to the summit of the mountain. There was the beacon which had cost me so much, a square stack of wood, immediately above our heads. Below were two or three huts which had belonged, no doubt, to goatherds, and which were now used to shelter these rascals. Into one of these I was cast, bound and helpless, and the dead body of my poor comrade was laid beside me.

I was lying there with the one thought still consuming me, how to wait a few hours and to get at that pile of fagots above my head, when the door of my prison opened and a man entered. Had my hands been free I should have flown at his throat, for it was none other than De Pombal. A couple of brigands were at his heels, but he ordered them back and closed the door behind him.

"You villain!" said I.

"Hush!" he cried. "Speak low, for I do not know who may be listening, and my life is at stake. I have some words to say to you, Colonel Gerard; I wish well to you, as I did to your dead companion. As I spoke to you beside his body I saw that we were surrounded, and that your capture was unavoidable. I should have shared your fate had I hesitated. I instantly captured you myself, so as to preserve the confidence of the band. Your own sense will tell you that there was nothing else for me to do. I do not know now whether I can save you, but at least I will try."

This was a new light upon the situation. I told him that I could not tell how far he spoke the truth, but that I would judge him by his actions.

"I ask nothing better," said he. "A word of advice to you! The chief will see you now. Speak him fair, or he will have you sawn between two planks. Contradict nothing he says. Give him such information as he wants. It is your only chance. If you can gain time something may come in our favour. Now, I have no more time. Come at once, or suspicion may be awakened." He helped

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me to rise, and then, opening the door, he dragged me out very roughly, and with the aid of the fellows outside he brutally pushed and thrust me to the place where the guerilla chief was seated, with his rude followers gathered round him.

A remarkable man was Manuelo, "The Smiler." He was fat and florid and comfortable, with a big, clean-shaven face and a bald head, the very model of a kindly father of a family. As I looked at his honest smile I could scarcely believe that this was, indeed, the infamous ruffian whose name was a horror through the English Army as well as our own. It is well known that Trent, who was a British officer, afterwards had the fellow hanged for his brutalities. He sat upon a boulder and he beamed upon me like one who meets an old acquaintance. I observed, however, that one of his men leaned upon a long saw, and the sight was enough to cure me of all delusions.

"Good evening, Colonel Gerard," said he. "We have been highly honoured by General Massena's staff: Major Cortex one day, Colonel Duplessis the next, and now Colonel Gerard. Possibly the Marshal himself may be induced to honour us with a visit. You have seen Duplessis, I understand. Cortex you will find nailed to a tree down yonder. It only remains to be decided how we can best dispose of yourself."

It was not a cheering speech; but all the time his fat face was wreathed in smiles, and he lisped out his words in the most mincing and amiable fashion. Now, however, he suddenly leaned forward, and I read a very real intensity in his eyes.

"Colonel Gerard," said he, "I cannot promise you your life, for it is not our custom, but I can give you an easy death or I can give you a terrible one. Which shall it be?"

"What do you wish me to do in exchange?"

"If you would die easy I ask you to give me truthful answers to the questions which I ask."

A sudden thought flashed through my mind.

"You wish to kill me," said I; "it cannot matter to you how I die. If I answer your questions, will you let me choose the manner of my own death?"

"Yes, I will," said he, "so long as it is before midnight to-night."

"Swear it!" I cried.

"The word of a Portuguese gentleman is sufficient," said he.

"Not a word will I say until you have sworn it."

He flushed with anger and his eyes swept round towards the saw. But he understood from my tone that I meant what I said, and that I was not a man to be bullied into submission. He pulled a cross from under his zammara or jacket of black sheepskin.

"I swear it," said he.

Oh, my joy as I heard the words! What an end—what an end for the first swordsman of France! I could have laughed with delight at the thought.

"Now, your questions!" said I.

"You swear in turn to answer them truly?"

"I do, upon the honour of a gentleman and a soldier." It was, as you perceive, a terrible thing that I promised, but what was it compared to what I might gain by compliance?

"This is a very fair and a very interesting bargain," said he, taking a note-book from his pocket. "Would you kindly turn your gaze towards the French camp?"

Following the direction of his gesture, I turned and looked down upon the camp in the plain beneath us. In spite of the fifteen miles, one could in that clear atmosphere see every detail with the utmost distinctness. There were the long squares of our tents and our huts, with the cavalry lines and the dark patches which marked the ten batteries of artillery. How sad to think of my magnificent regiment waiting down yonder, and to know that they would never see their colonel again! With one squadron of them I could have swept all these cut-throats off the face of the earth. My eager eyes filled with tears as I looked at the corner of the camp where I knew that there were eight hundred men, any one of whom would have died for his colonel. But my sadness vanished when I saw beyond the tents the plumes of smoke which marked the head-quarters at Torres Novas. There was Massena, and, please God, at the cost of my life his mission would that night be done. A spasm of pride and exultation filled my breast. I should have liked to have had a voice of thunder that I might call to them, "Behold it is I, Etienne Gerard, who will die in order to save the army of Clausel!" It was, indeed, sad to think that so noble a deed should be done, and that no one should be there to tell the tale.

"Now," said the brigand chief, "you see the camp and you see also the road which leads to Coimbra. It is crowded with your

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"DOES THIS MEAN THAT MASSENA IS ABOUT TO RETREAT?"

fourgons and your ambulances. Does this mean that Massena is about to retreat?"

One could see the dark moving lines of waggons with an occasional flash of steel from the escort. There could, apart from my promise, be no indiscretion in admitting that which was already obvious.

"He will retreat," said I.

"By Coimbra?"

"I believe so."

"But the army of Clausel?"

I shrugged my shoulders.

"Every path to the south is blocked. No message can reach them. If Massena falls back the army of Clausel is doomed."

"It must take its chance," said I.

"How many men has he?"

"I should say about fourteen thousand."

"How much cavalry?"

"One brigade of Montbrun's Division."

"What regiments?"

"The 4th Chasseurs, the 9th Hussars, and a regiment of Cuirassiers."

"Quite right," said he, looking at his note-book. "I can tell you speak the truth, and Heaven help you if you don't." Then, division by division, he went over the whole army, asking the composition of each brigade. Need I tell you that I would have had my tongue torn out before I would have told him such things had I not a greater end in view? I would let him know all if I could but save the army of Clausel.

At last he closed his note-book and replaced it in his pocket. "I am obliged to you for this information, which shall reach Lord Wellington to-morrow," said he. "You have done your share of the bargain; it is for me now to perform mine. How would you wish to die? As a soldier you would, no doubt, prefer to be shot, but some think that a jump over the Merodal precipice is really an easier death. A good few have taken it, but we were, unfortunately, never able to get an opinion from them afterwards. There is the saw, too, which does not appear to be popular. We could hang you, no doubt, but it would involve the inconvenience of going down to the wood. However, a promise is a promise, and you seem to be an excellent fellow, so we will spare no pains to meet your wishes."

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"You said," I answered, "that I must die before midnight. I will choose, therefore, just one minute before that hour."

"Very good," said he. "Such clinging to life is rather childish, but your wishes shall be met."

"As to the method," I added, "I love a death which all the world can see. Put me on yonder pile of fagots and burn me alive, as saints and martyrs have been burned before me. That is no common end, but one which an Emperor might envy."

The idea seemed to amuse him very much. "Why not?" said he. "If Massena has sent you to spy upon us, he may guess what the fire upon the mountains means."

"Exactly," said I. "You have hit upon my very reason. He will guess, and all will know, that I have died a soldier's death."

"I see no objection whatever," said the brigand, with his abominable smile. "I will send some goat's flesh and wine into your hut. The sun is sinking, and it is nearly eight o'clock. In four hours be ready for your end."

It was a beautiful world to be leaving. I looked at the golden haze below, where the last rays of the sinking sun shone upon the blue waters of the winding Tagus and gleamed upon the white sails of the English transports. Very beautiful it was, and very sad to leave; but there are things more beautiful than that. The death that is died for the sake of others, honour, and duty, and loyalty, and love—these are the beauties far brighter than any which the eye can see. My breast was filled with admiration for my own most noble conduct, and with wonder whether any soul would ever come to know how I had placed myself in the heart of the beacon which saved the army of Clausel. I hoped so and I prayed so, for what a consolation it would be to my mother, what an example to the army, what a pride to my Hussars! When De Pombal came at last into my hut with the food and the wine, the first request I made him was that he would write an account of my death and send it to the French camp. He answered not a word, but I ate my supper with a better appetite from the thought that my glorious fate would not be altogether unknown.

I had been there about two hours when the door opened again, and the chief stood looking in. I was in darkness, but a brigand with a torch stood beside him, and I saw his eyes and his teeth gleaming as he peered at me.

"Ready?" he asked.

"It is not yet time."

"You stand out for the last minute?"

"A promise is a promise."

"Very good. Be it so. We have a little justice to do among ourselves, for one of my fellows has been misbehaving. We have a strict rule of our own which is no respecter of persons, as De Pombal here could tell you. Do you truss him and lay him on the fagots, De Pombal, and I will return to see him die."

De Pombal and the man with the torch entered, while I heard the steps of the chief passing away. De Pombal closed the door.

"Colonel Gerard," said he, "you must trust this man, for he is one of my party. It is neck or nothing. We may save you yet. But I take a great risk, and I want a definite promise. If we save you, will you guarantee that we have a friendly reception in the French camp and that all the past will be forgotten?"

"I do guarantee it."

"And I trust your honour. Now, quick, quick, there is not an instant to lose! If this monster returns we shall die horribly, all three."

I stared in amazement at what he did. Catching up a long rope he wound it round the body of my dead comrade, and he tied a cloth round his mouth so as to almost cover his face.

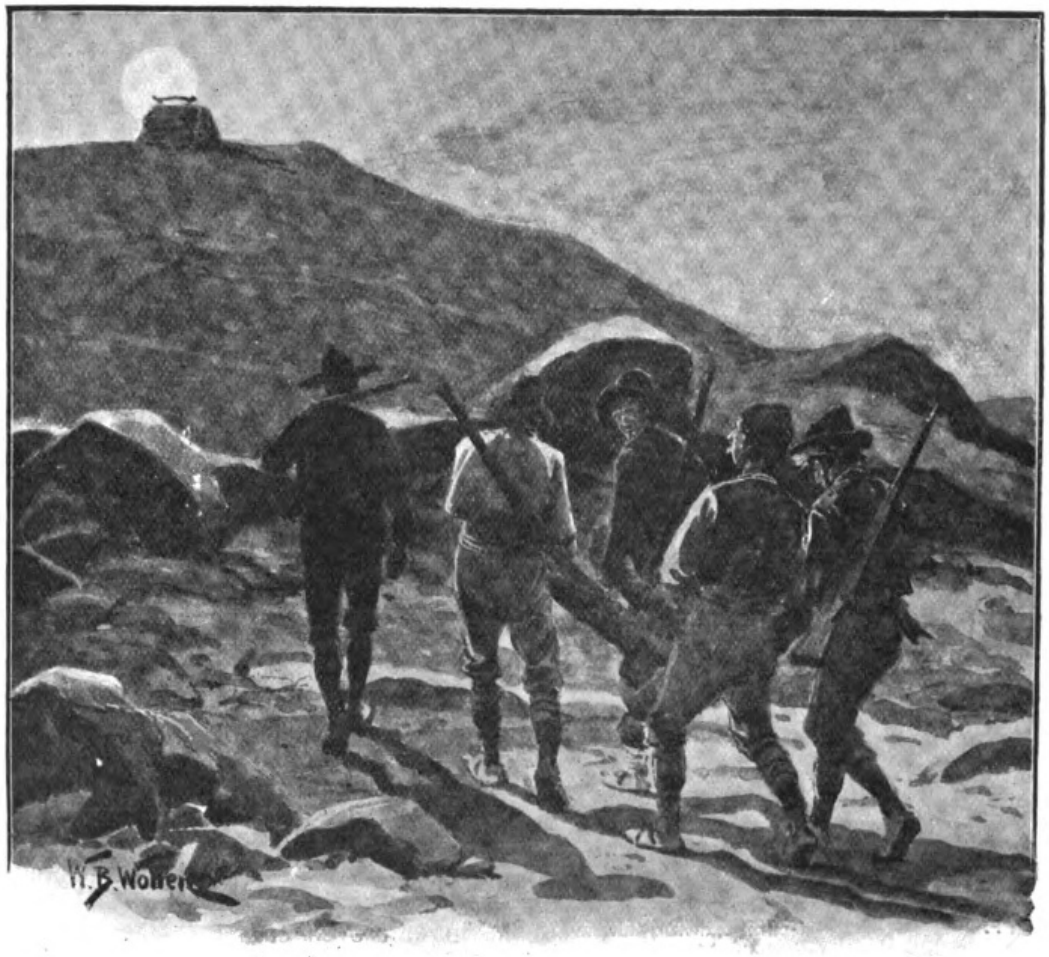
"Do you lie there!" he cried, and he laid me in the place of the dead body. "I have four of my men waiting, and they will place this upon the beacon." He opened the door and gave an order. Several of the brigands entered and bore out Duplessis. For myself I remained upon the floor, with my mind in a turmoil of hope and wonder.

Five minutes later De Pombal and his men were back.

"You are laid upon the beacon," said he; "I defy anyone in the world to say it is not you, and you are so gagged and bound that no one can expect you to speak or move. Now, it only remains to carry forth the body of Duplessis and to toss it over the Merodal precipice."

Two of them seized me by the head and two by the heels and carried me, stiff and inert, from the hut. As I came into the open air I could have cried out in my amazement. The moon had risen above the beacon, and there, clear outlined against its silver light, was the figure of the man stretched upon the top. The brigands were either in their camp or standing round the beacon, for none of them stopped or questioned our little

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"THERE, CLEAR OUTLINED AGAINST THE SILVER LIGHT, WAS THE FIGURE OF THE MAN STRETCHED UPON THE TOP."

party. De Pombal led them in the direction of the precipice. At the brow we were out of sight, and there I was allowed to use my feet once more. De Pombal pointed to a narrow, winding track.

"This is the way down," said he, and then, suddenly, "Dios mio, what is that?"

A terrible cry had risen out of the woods beneath us. I saw that De Pombal was shivering like a frightened horse.

"It is that devil," he whispered. "He is treating another as he treated me. But on, on, for Heaven help us if he lays his hands upon us!"

One by one we crawled down the narrow goat track. At the bottom of the cliff we were back in the woods once more. Suddenly a yellow glare shone above us, and the black shadows of the tree-trunks started out in front. They had fired the beacon behind us. Even from where we stood we could see that impassive body amid the flames, and the black figures of the guerillas as they danced, howling like cannibals, round the pile. Ha! how I shook my fist at them, the dogs, and how I vowed that one day my Hussars and I would make the reckoning level!

De Pombal knew how the outposts were placed and all the paths which led through the forest. But to avoid these villains we had to plunge among the hills and walk for many a weary mile. And yet how gladly would I have walked those extra leagues if only for one sight which they brought to my eyes! It may have been two o'clock in the morning when we halted upon the bare shoulder of a hill over which our path curled. Looking back we saw the red glow of the embers of the beacon as if volcanic fires were bursting from the tall peak of Merodal. And then, as I gazed, I saw something else—something which caused me to shriek with joy and to fall upon the ground, rolling in my delight. For, far away upon the southern horizon, there winked and twinkled one great yellow light, throbbing and flaming, the light of no house, the light of no star, but the answering beacon of Mount d'Ossa, which told that the army of Clausel knew what Etienne Gerard had been sent to tell them.

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Gems of the World's Galleries.

The Most Precious Pictures According to Official Opinion.

By Frederick Dolman.

In The Strand Magazine about two years ago a number of representative English artists were called into conference on the question as to which was the greatest of the world's pictures. The opinions were most interesting, perhaps, because of the bias of the individual temperament, although in the aggregate they may be said to have represented the cultured judgment of the time. In the preparation of the present article I have appealed to the official view on a matter of similar interest—the most important works which the nations now possess for themselves in the great national collections, addressing my question to the curator or director of the following representative galleries:—

France ..	The Louvre, Paris.
Germany..	The Royal Museum, Berlin; Dresden Gallery; Pinakothek, Munich.
Italy	Borghese Palace, Rome; Academy of Fine Arts, Venice; Uffizi Gallery and Pitti Palace, Florence.
Belgium ...	Antwerp.
Holland..	Royal Picture Gallery, La Hague; Rijks Museum, Amsterdam.
Austria ..	The Belvidere, Vienna.
Spain	The Prado Museum, Madrid.
United States	The Metropolitan Museum, New York; The Art Institute of Chicago.

The Louvre is the greatest of the European picture galleries, having 2,500 works by nearly all the leading masters. But the collection has been formed in rather haphazard fashion during three centuries, although before Napoleon had carried to Paris his rich spoils of war it contained fewer than 600 pictures. According to present-day taste the standard of excellence at the Louvre greatly varies, and a large proportion of the collection falls below that which has been established in such modern galleries as those of London and Berlin. Its director, M. A. Koemppen, had, therefore, not the supreme difficulty which might be supposed in answering my question. Whilst stating in his letter that "there are many pictures in the museum of the Louvre which, as its *chef d'œuvre*, might be reproduced in The Strand Magazine," the director at once proceeds to mention as his own choice "La Gioconda," by Leonardo da Vinci. This picture, it may be remembered, was selected by Mr. Hacker, A.R.A., as an example of female beauty in art (*vide* "The Most Beautiful Women in Painting," Strand Magazine, December, 1900), and the interesting circumstances under which it was painted were then recalled. Francis I., the founder of the Louvre in 1541, purchased the portrait about fifty years after it was painted for 4,000 gold florins, but the director could give me no estimate of its present-day value, "the value in money of a work of art depending so much upon various circumstances."

The Prado Museum at Madrid ranks next to the Louvre in point of size, the collection numbering nearly as many pictures, and having an even earlier origin. Begun by Charles V., the collection was increased by Philip II. and Philip IV. The building it now occupies, however, is comparatively modern, having been built about 1785 as a museum of natural history and academy of sciences. Occupying a splendid site close to the Salon del Prado, it ranks, next to the Royal Palace from which the pictures were removed, as the chief architectural feature of the Spanish capital.

From the many fine specimens of the art of Titian, Raphael, Veronese, Tintoretto, Velasquez, Vandyck, Rubens, and Teniers which the Prado Gallery contains, the director, Señor José Villegar, wrote that preference should be given for my article to the "Meninas" of Velasquez, although he admitted his inability to place even an approximate price upon the picture. "Las Meninas" ("The Maids of Honour") was painted by the great Spanish artist at the Court of Philip IV. in 1656, when Velasquez was fifty-seven years of age and at the height of his renown. In the picture "the painter stands at his easel in one of the chambers of the palace. Though the King and Queen are not in sight, their figures being supposed to be placed beyond the canvas, we see them

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in the reflection of a mirror suspended on the farther wall. The little Princess, Margarita Maria, some four or five years old, occupies a prominent position in the foreground. She is attended by her maids of honour—one of whom kneels to hand the Princess a cup of water. Near to this group are shown two well-known dwarfs, Barbola and Pertusato, sporting with a huge mastiff. A flood of light streams in from an open door far down the room, where Don Joseph Nieto, the Queen's quartermaster, has just raised a curtain. Two other personages of the Court converse apart, barely distinguishable in the darkness of the shadows."

The King is said to have been delighted with the picture, and there is a tradition that when it was shown to him in its finished state he impulsively seized the brush and painted in, on the artist's figure, the cross of Santiago, which was the badge of knighthood in Spain. This honour was conferred upon Velasquez, but not, it is believed, till some years later, when he himself put the decoration into the picture.

The Rijks Museum at Amsterdam has no fewer than 1,700 pictures; but the Royal Picture Gallery at The Hague, with 600, is about the smallest of the leading European collections.



"LAS MENINAS." BY VELASQUEZ.
The most valuable Picture in the Prado Gallery, Madrid.

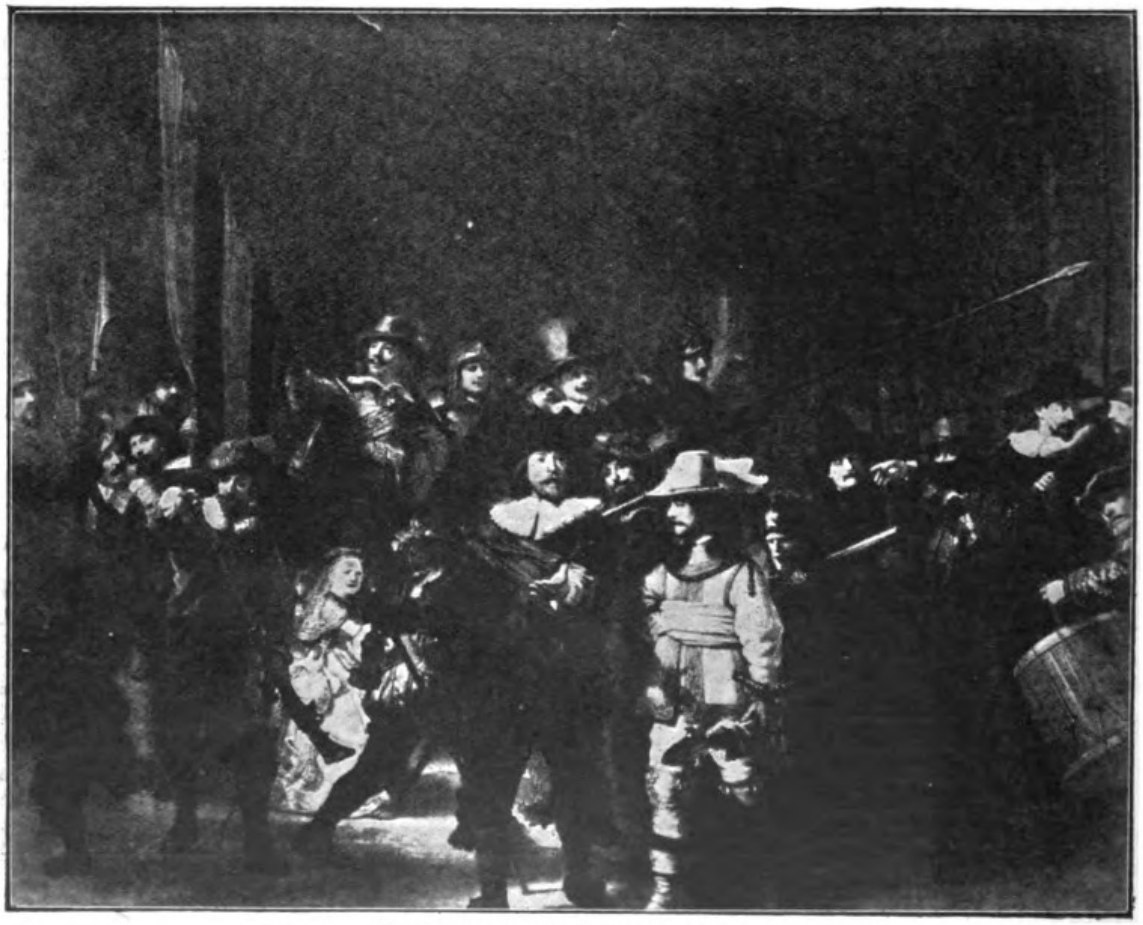
"The most important and celebrated picture," said the director of the Rijks Museum, B. W. F. van Riemdyk, without the slightest hesitation, "is 'The Night Watch,' by Rembrandt. A picture such as this is not to be valued; it is priceless. It never was sold and never shall be."

"The Night Watch" is about the most misleading title which ever got attached to a picture. In point of fact, Rembrandt's great masterpiece has no reference to the night and only a slight connection with a watch. The picture was thus named by French writers early in the eighteenth century, and Sir Joshua Reynolds gave currency to the error in England. At that time the picture was so "obscured by oil and varnish" as to make its real meaning a matter of considerable doubt. But in 1758 it was skilfully cleaned by an artist named Van Dyck, who discovered the shield containing the names of some of the persons represented. From this clue it was established that the subject of the work was "The Sortie of the Company of Franz Banning Cock," a portion of the Civic Guard of Amsterdam emerging from its barracks. Captain Banning Cock, with his lieutenant, is in the forefront of the picture, and other prominent figures are an ensign with the colours of the city of Amsterdam—orange, white, and blue—and a drummer with a dog at his heels, whilst behind them, crowding at the doors, are sergeants with the halberds and guards with arquebuses and pikes. Altogether there are twenty-eight figures in the picture, the predominant colour of which is given by the citron-yellow uniform, with a blue sash, of the captain, other rich and harmonious effects being obtained from the black velvet

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of the captain, the green uniform of the drummer, and the reds of the musketeers. The darkness of the background, which induced the blunder of which I have spoken, is believed to be entirely due to some accident or neglect in the care of the picture.

"The Sortie of the Banning Cock Company," it is recorded, gave great dissatisfaction to Captain Banning Cock, from whom Rembrandt received the commission, although when it was painted in 1642 the artist, at the age of thirty-five, was already famous and

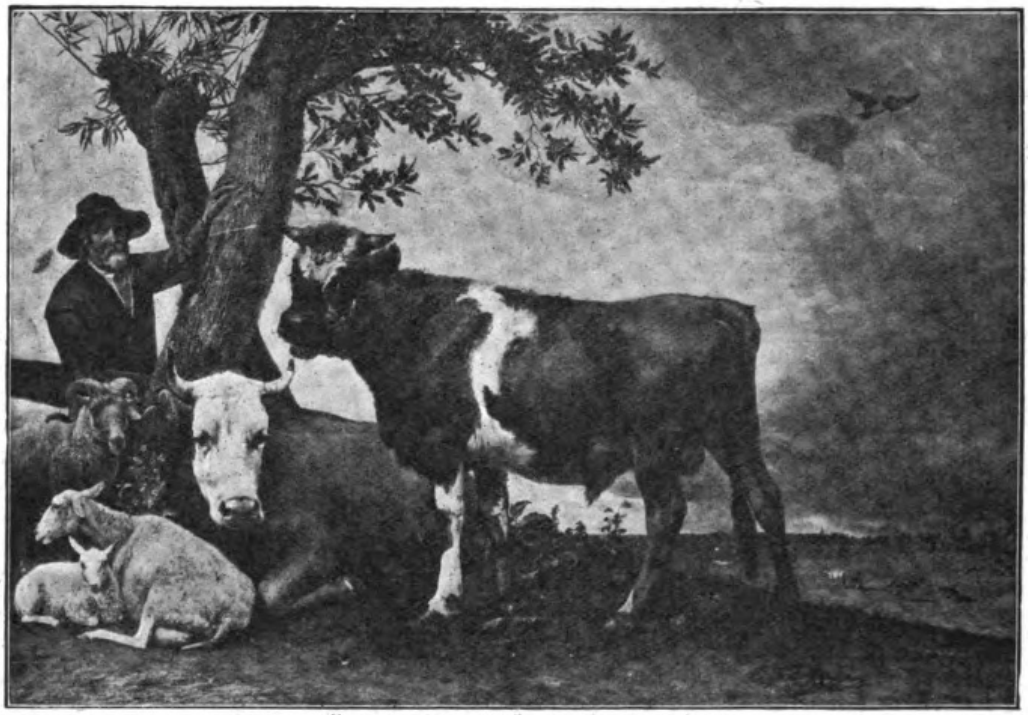


"THE NIGHT WATCH." BY REMBRANDT.
The most valuable Picture of the Rijks Gallery, Amsterdam.

commanding large prices. So little was it to his liking, indeed, that the captain shortly afterwards had his portrait, with those of his company, painted again by another artist. Of this picture all trace has disappeared, whilst Rembrandt's work, more or less carefully preserved generation after generation under circumstances which can now be only conjectured, is to-day prized as the greatest of Amsterdam's many art treasures. It is probable that Captain Banning's discontent arose from the picture's want of fidelity in portraiture. The bad portrait has, perhaps, become the great picture, palpitating with human interest and truth, for, in the words of an English critic, in looking at "The Sortie of the Banning Cock Company" one "can almost hear the beating of the drum and the barking of the dog."

The director of The Hague Gallery mentioned more than one work in replying to my question, but gave the first place to Paul Potter's "The Young Bull." This was one of the pictures carried off to the Louvre, and when there was regarded as the fourth most valuable picture in the great French collection. The Dutch animal-painter had only about ten years of achievement, dying at the age of twenty-eight, after having produced about 140 works. "The Young Bull," which measures 7ft. 10in. by 11ft. 4in., is his only life-size picture of the kind, and was produced in 1647, when he was about midway in his brief career. It is not known for whom the great canvas was painted, but there is a record of its sale in 1649 for 630 florins; when taken away by Napoleon the Dutch vainly offered to ransom it for 60,000

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"THE YOUNG BULL." BY PAUL POTTER.
The most valuable Picture in The Hague Gallery.

florins. The bull in the picture has as his companions a cow, a ram, a sheep and lamb, and a shepherd, with a background somewhat monotonous in its distribution of light. The judgment of the official expert in this case certainly corresponds with popular taste, for most visitors to The Hague Gallery, whether native or foreign, first make their way to the room in which "The Young Bull" is exhibited.

The Belvidere Gallery at Vienna was once



THE ALTAR-PIECE OF ILDEFONSO. BY RUBENS.
The most valuable Picture in the Vienna Gallery.

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the residence of the renowned Prince Eugène. The palatial building is now the home of 1,700 pictures, including specimens of Rubens, Dürer, and the Italian masters, that give great distinction to the Austrian capital as an art centre. The director, Dr. Glück, gave me a list of seven as its most valuable masterpieces, but finally expressed his own belief in the supremacy of Rubens's "Ildefonso Altar." The picture thus called was painted for the church of the Order of St. Ildefonso at Brussels, whence at some time or other it was removed to Vienna. The work is in three parts. In the centre the Virgin is depicted presenting to the saint the chasuble of the Order, and on the left and right wings respectively are the Infanta Isabella with St. Clara and the Archduke Albert kneeling in the dress of the Order. This work, which was one of several produced by Rubens for the decoration of Brussels churches, is believed to date from about 1630, when the Flemish master was between fifty and sixty years of age.



THE ALTAR-PIECE OF ST. BAVON. BY HUBERT AND JOHN VAN EYCK.
The most valuable Picture in the Berlin Gallery.

Another altar-piece is considered by its director to be the most valuable possession of the gallery at Berlin. This is the joint work of Hubert and John Van Eyck, the two Flemish painters who flourished early in the fifteenth century. It was placed on the altar of St. Bavon, in Ghent, in 1432, with a coloured inscription on the framework setting forth that the picture was begun by Hubert Van Eyck and completed by his younger brother John. Having "The Worship of the Lamb" as the nominal subject, the painting, in a series of panels, really depicts the whole Christian story as it was regarded generally in the fifteenth century. Apart from its excellence, "The Worship of the Lamb" is noteworthy as the first picture executed wholly in oils. It is believed to have represented ten years' labour on the part of the two brothers, and in its inception was regarded by Hubert Van Eyck as the greatest effort of his life; in point of fact, it is the only work which can now be definitely traced to his brush, whereas the story of several of John Van Eyck's pictures has been handed down to the present generation.

The Berlin Gallery, which now numbers about 900 pictures, may be said to date from

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1821, when the collection of Mr. Solly, an Englishman, was purchased by the Prussian Government for what was then considered the very large sum of £110,000. This was followed by the building of a gallery to which, in 1829, was removed a selection of works from the Royal collections in Berlin and Potsdam. The galleries of Munich (1,450 pictures) and Dresden (2,400) are much larger than that of the capital, but they have not been filled with the same regard for a uniform standard of artistic value.



"THE MELON EATERS" BY MURILLO.
The most valuable Picture in the Munich Gallery.

The director of the Dresden Gallery, Dr. K. Woermann, fulfilled my confident expectation by at once nominating Raphael's "Madonna"—usually called the "Sistine Madonna"—for, as visitors to the gallery will remember, this work is given a room all to itself. The Dresden "Madonna" was chosen by Mr. G. F. Watts, R.A., as his example of the greatest achievement in art (STRAND MAGAZINE, August, 1900), and in the article where this opinion was quoted some particulars will be found concerning this great picture.

The letter with which Dr. Reber, the director of the Pinakothek, Munich, favoured me suggested that, on the whole, the most valuable and representative picture in the collection under his charge is Murillo's "The Melon Eaters." Although a famous example of the Spanish master, measuring 50in. by 42in., little is known concerning the history of this picture, and Murillo's biographers have failed to record the circumstances under which it was painted. It was originally in the Mannheim Gallery.

"The great triptych, 'The Descent from the Cross,' the chief work of Quentin



"THE DESCENT FROM THE CROSS." BY QUENTIN MASSYS.
The most valuable Picture in the Antwerp Gallery.

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"FLORA." BY TITIAN.
The most valuable Picture in the Uffizi Gallery, Florence.

Massys," writes M. Pierre Koch, the curator of the Antwerp Museum of Fine Arts, "may perhaps be considered the most precious picture in our gallery—its value is inestimable."

Massys, whose works are comparatively little known in this country, was a Flemish painter, a native of Louvain, whose life was spent chiefly at Antwerp. Born in 1466, he painted the triptych for the chapel of the joiners' guild in Antwerp Cathedral about 1508. The joiners' guild, it is recorded, paid the artist 300 florins for the work, which amount was increased to 1,500 florins when the Antwerp magistrates purchased it for the town in 1580.

Of the Italian galleries the Uffizi and Pitti at Florence have undisputed pre-eminence. By some authorities, indeed, they are said to form together the finest collection in the world, this verdict being based upon the absence of actual inferiority and the small proportion of even mediocrity in the 1,900 works which they contain. Both collections are housed in palaces of mediæval splendour, and are under the direction of the same gentleman, Signor E. Nidalf. As the most valuable picture in the Uffizi he mentioned Titian's "Flora," and in the Pitti Raphael's "La Madonna della Seggiola."

Titian's world-renowned "Flora" is the picture of a lady whose identity has never been established, although by some writers she is supposed to have been Laura D'Este, the wife or mistress of Duke Alphonso of Ferrara. The title "Flora" may have a double meaning, as regards the lady's name and also the roses, jessamine, etc., which she is handing to her unseen lover. The work, which depicts the lady's head and shoulders life-size, was executed by Titian about 1523. It was taken out of the Duke of Ferrara's "Gardaroba" and placed in the Uffizi Gallery as long ago as 1793. Unfortunately, it has suffered a good deal from the hands of time, although its colouring is still beautiful.

Raphael's "Madonna della



"THE MADONNA IN A CHAIR." BY RAPHAEL.
The most valuable Picture in the Pitti Gallery, Florence.

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Seggiola," or "Madonna in a Chair," has likewise suffered, being about the same age, although its worst injuries have probably been inflicted in the vain effort to restore its original beauty. The picture is believed to have been painted either for the Pope, Leo X., or for some member of the great Medici family, and it was exhibited as far back as 1589 in the Palace of the Uffizi.

The picture gallery at the Borghese Palace in Rome is still in private ownership; but it is destined eventually to become the property of the Italian nation, and in the meantime it is like a public institution in the facilities which are given for its public use, whilst it is incomparably superior to the many private collections still to be found in the Eternal City.

"The picture in this gallery," writes Signor Gio. Piancastelli, the director, "I advise you to reproduce in your article is 'The Sacred and Profane Love,' by Tiziano Vecelli, which is well known *urbi et orbi*, even too much known to be reproduced again, but the one that characterizes the gallery better than any other. It is very difficult to value it. I can tell you only that there have been offers up to £200,000."

As was the case with Raphael's Dresden "Madonna," Titian's "Sacred and Profane Love" figured in THE STRAND'S article on "The World's Greatest Pictures." It was the choice of Mr. W. P. Frith, R.A., with whom I discussed the circumstances under which it was painted (STRAND MAGAZINE, August, 1900.)

The Accademia di Belle Arti at Venice, now located in one of the old guild houses, is the stronghold, so to speak, of Titian's work. Although its 650 pictures include many great examples of other masters, I felt almost certain that the director, Signor N. Barozzi, would mention either a Titian or a Tintoretto in reply to my question. His answer was in favour of "The Assumption of the Virgin," by the former master, the work which in 1518 placed Titian at the head of the then flourishing school of Venetian artists. It was painted for the high altar of the church of Santa Maria di Friari in Venice, and occupied him for two years. When the picture was raised to the altar the church was thronged with a crowd of people who were lost in admiration of the beauty of its colouring. Although in excellent preservation, the picture is said to be much less beautiful in its present position at the Academy than when it was still adorning the church.



"THE ASSUMPTION OF THE VIRGIN." BY TITIAN.
The most valuable Picture in the Academy, Venice.

What have we in our National Gallery to be placed in the same category with these gems of the greatest price in the national galleries of France, Germany, Italy, Austria, Holland, and Spain? The answer is hardly a matter of opinion, I suppose, for everybody remembers the sensational vote of £70,000

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in Parliament for the purchase of Raphael's "Ansidei Madonna" from the Duke of Marlborough—the highest price ever paid in any country for a single picture. This work, which was bought by the nation in 1884, was acquired by the first Duke in the course of one of his campaigns for a comparatively small sum. It was painted by Raphael on a commission from the Ansidei family of Perugia, who presented it to the church of S. Fiorenzo in that city for the decoration of the altar. There is little doubt but that the work was produced about 1506 or 1507, when Raphael was only twenty-three and in his second or "Florentine" manner, as it is called, although for a long time the date in the corner of the picture on the border of the Virgin's robe was read as MDV., instead of MDVI. or MDVII.

In recent years the American millionaire has loomed largely in European art sales, and some of the most costly pictures have crossed the Atlantic. But these are not yet to be found in the public galleries of the United States. The most costly picture of which the Metropolitan Museum, New York, can boast is J. L. E. Meissonier's "1807," for which 66,000dols. was paid a few years ago. As Mr. G. H. Store, the director, in giving me this information, points out, however, the picture has greatly appreciated in value, and it is estimated by experts that if "1807" were put up to auction in Paris to-day it would fetch at least 200,000dols. — or £40,000. The gallery of which this is the *chef d'œuvre* was built in 1880 in the midst of the great Central Park, at a cost of 500,000dols.



"THE JUBILEE." BY ADRIAEN VAN OSTADE.
The most valuable Picture in the Art Institute, Chicago.

Chicago, the constant rival of New York, built its Art Institute about the same time, giving the building a fine site on the lake front. "I rather think," replied Mr. W. M. R. French, the director, to my question, "the most costly picture in our collection is 'The Jubilee,' by Adriaen van Ostade, which we bought of the Princess Demidoff, of Florence, for 40,500dols." "The Jubilee," a canvas which is 18in. by 16in., is signed and dated 1675. It is a highly characteristic and important example of the Flemish master, about 400 of whose oil paintings are extant, but it is not a picture to which any particular story is attached, and nothing is known of its antecedents, I believe, before it came into the possession of the Russo-Italian family of the Demidoffs at Florence.

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The Sorceress of the Strand.

By L. T. Meade and Robert Eustace.

II.—THE BLOOD-RED CROSS.

IN the month of November in the year 1899 I found myself a guest in the house of one of my oldest friends — George Rowland. His beautiful place in Yorkshire was an ideal holiday resort. It went by the name of Rowland's Folly, and had been built on the site of a former dwelling in the reign of the first George. The house was now replete with every modern luxury. It, however, very nearly cost its first owner, if not the whole of his fortune, yet the most precious heirloom of the family. This was a pearl necklace of almost fabulous value. It had been secured as booty by a certain Geoffrey Rowland at the time of the Battle of Agincourt, had originally been the property of one of the Dukes of Genoa, and had even for a short time been in the keeping of the Pope. From the moment that Geoffrey Rowland took possession of the necklace there had been several attempts made to deprive him of it. Sword, fire, water, poison, had all been used, but ineffectually. The necklace with its eighty pearls, smooth, symmetrical, pear-shaped, of a translucent white colour and with a subdued iridescent sheen, was still in the possession of the family, and was likely to remain there, as George Rowland told me, until the end of time. Each bride wore the necklace on her wedding-day, after which it was put into the strong-room and, as a rule, never seen again until the next bridal occasion. The pearls were roughly estimated as worth from two to three thousand pounds each, but the historical value of the necklace put the price almost beyond the dreams of avarice.

It was reported that in the autumn of that same year an American millionaire had offered to buy it from the family at their own price, but as no terms would be listened to the negotiations fell through.

George Rowland belonged to the oldest and proudest family in the West Riding, and no man looked a better gentleman or more fit to uphold ancient dignities than he. He was proud to boast that from the earliest days no stain of dishonour had touched his house, that the women of the family were as good as the men, their blood pure, their morals irreproachable, their ideas lofty.

I went to Rowland's Folly in November, and found a pleasant, hospitable, and cheerful hostess in Lady Kennedy, Rowland's only sister. Antonia Ripley was, however, the centre of all interest. Rowland was engaged to Antonia, and the history was romantic. Lady Kennedy told me all about it.



"LADY KENNEDY TOLD ME ALL ABOUT IT."

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"She is a penniless girl without family," remarked the good woman, somewhat snappishly. "I can't imagine what George was thinking of."

"How did your brother meet her?" I asked.

"We were both in Italy last autumn; we were staying in Naples, at the Vesuve. An English lady was staying there of the name of Studley. She died while we were at the hotel. She had under her charge a young girl, the same Antonia who is now engaged to my brother. Before her death she begged of us to befriend her, saying that the child was without money and without friends. All Mrs. Studley's money died with her. We promised, not being able to do otherwise. George fell in love almost at first sight. Little Antonia was provided for by becoming engaged to my brother. I have nothing to say against the girl, but I dislike this sort of match very much. Besides, she is more foreign than English."

"Cannot Miss Ripley tell you anything about her history?"

"Nothing, except that Mrs. Studley adopted her when she was a tiny child. She says, also, that she has a dim recollection of a large building crowded with people, and a man who stretched out his arms to her and was taken forcibly away. That is all. She is quite a nice child, and amiable, with touching ways and a pathetic face; but no one knows what her ancestry was. Ah, there you are, Antonia! What is the matter now?"

The girl tripped across the room. She was like a young fawn; of a smooth, olive complexion—dark of eye and mysteriously beautiful, with the graceful step which is seldom granted to an English girl.

"My lace dress has come," she said. "Markham is unpacking it—but the bodice is made with a low neck."

Lady Kennedy frowned.

"You are too absurd, Antonia," she said. "Why won't you dress like other girls? I assure you that peculiarity of yours of always wearing your dress high in the evening annoys George."

"Does it?" she answered, and she stepped back and put her hand to her neck just below the throat—a constant habit of hers, as I afterwards had occasion to observe.

"It disturbs him very much," said Lady Kennedy. "He spoke to me about it only yesterday. Please understand, Antonia, that at the ball you cannot possibly wear a dress high to your throat. It cannot be permitted."

"I shall be properly dressed on the night of the ball," replied the girl.

Her face grew crimson, then deadly pale.

"It only wants a fortnight to that time, but I shall be ready."

There was a solemnity about her words. She turned and left the room.

"Antonia is a very trying character," said Lady Kennedy. "Why won't she act like other girls? She makes such a fuss about wearing a proper evening dress that she tries my patience—but she is all crotchets."

"A sweet little girl for all that," was my answer.

"Yes; men like her."

Soon afterwards, as I was strolling on the terrace, I met Miss Ripley. She was sitting in a low chair. I noticed how small, and slim, and young she looked, and how pathetic was the expression of her little face. When she saw me she seemed to hesitate; then she came to my side.

"May I walk with you, Mr. Druce?" she asked.

"I am quite at your service," I answered. "Where shall we go?"

"It doesn't matter. I want to know if you will help me."

"Certainly, if I can, Miss Ripley."

"It is most important. I want to go to London."

"Surely that is not very difficult?"

"They won't allow me to go alone, and they are both very busy. I have just sent a telegram to a friend. I want to see her. I know she will receive me. I want to go to-morrow. May I venture to ask that you should be my escort?"

"My dear Miss Ripley, certainly," I said. "I will help you with pleasure."

"It must be done," she said, in a low voice. "I have put it off too long. When I marry him he shall not be disappointed."

"I do not understand you," I said, "but I will go with you with the greatest willingness."

She smiled; and the next day, much to my own amazement, I found myself travelling first-class up to London, with little Miss Ripley as my companion. Neither Rowland nor his sister had approved; but Antonia had her own way, and the fact that I would escort her cleared off some difficulties.

During our journey she bent towards me and said, in a low tone:—

"Have you ever heard of that most wonderful, that great woman, Madame Sara?"

I looked at her intently.

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"'IT MUST BE DONE,' SHE SAID."

"I have certainly heard of Madame Sara," I said, with emphasis, "but I sincerely trust that you have nothing to do with her."

"I have known her almost all my life," said the girl. "Mrs. Studley knew her also. I love her very much. I trust her. I am going to see her now."

"What do you mean?"

"It was to her I wired yesterday. She will receive me; she will help me. I am returning to the Folly to-night. Will you add to your kindness by escorting me home?"

"Certainly."

At Euston I put my charge into a hansom, arranging to meet her on the departure platform at twenty minutes to six that evening, and then taking another hansom drove as fast as I could to Vandeleur's address. During the latter part of my journey to town a sudden, almost unaccountable, desire to consult Vandeleur had taken possession of me. I was lucky enough to find this busiest of men at home and at leisure. He gave an exclamation of delight when my name was announced, and then came towards me with outstretched hand.

"I was just about to wire to you, Druce," he said. "From where have you sprung?"

"From no less a place than Rowland's Folly," was my answer.

"More and more amazing. Then you have met Miss Ripley, George Rowland's *fiancée*?"

"You have heard of the engagement, Vandeleur?"

"Who has not? What sort is the young lady?"

"I can tell you all you want to know, for I have travelled up to town with her."

"Ah!"

He was silent for a minute, evidently thinking hard; then drawing a chair near mine he seated himself.

"How long have you been at Rowland's Folly?" he asked.

"Nearly a week. I am to remain until after the wedding. I consider Rowland a lucky man. He is marrying a sweet little girl."

"You think so? By the way, have you ever noticed any peculiarity about her?"

"Only that she is singularly amiable and attractive."

"But any habit—pray think carefully before you answer me."

"Really, Vandeleur, your questions surprise me. Little Miss Ripley is a person with ideas and is not ashamed to stick to her principles. You know, of course, that in a house like Rowland's Folly it is the custom for the ladies to come to dinner in full dress. Now, Miss Ripley won't accommodate herself to this fashion, but *will* wear her dress high to the throat, however gay and festive the occasion."

"Ah! there doesn't seem to be much in that, does there?"

"I don't quite agree with you. Pressure has been brought to bear on the girl to make her conform to the usual regulations, and Lady Kennedy, a woman old enough to be her mother, is quite disagreeable on the point."

"But the girl sticks to her determination?"

"Absolutely, although she promises to yield and to wear the conventional dress at the ball given in her honour a week before the wedding."

Vandeleur was silent for nearly a minute; then dropping his voice he said, slowly:—

"Did Miss Ripley ever mention in your

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presence the name of our mutual foe—Madame Sara?"

"How strange that you should ask! On our journey to town to-day she told me that she knew the woman—she has known her for the greater part of her life — poor child, she even loves her. Vandeleur, that young girl is with Madame Sara now."

"Don't be alarmed, Druce; there is no immediate danger; but I may as well tell you that through my secret agents I have made discoveries which show that Madame has another iron in the fire, that once again she is preparing to convulse Society, and that little Miss Ripley is the victim."



"SHE IS PREPARING TO CONVULSE SOCIETY."

"You must be mistaken."

"So sure am I, that I want your help. You are returning to Rowland's Folly?"

"To-night."

"And Miss Ripley?"

"She goes with me. We meet at Euston for the six o'clock train."

"So far, good. By the way, has Rowland spoken to you lately about the pearl necklace?"

"No; why do you ask?"

"Because I understand that it was his intention to have the pearls slightly altered and reset in order to fit Miss Ripley's slender throat; also to have a diamond clasp affixed in place of the somewhat insecure one at present attached to the string of pearls. Messrs. Theodore and Mark, of Bond Street, were to undertake the commission. All was in preparation, and a messenger, accompanied by two detectives, was to go to Rowland's Folly to fetch the treasure, when the whole thing was countermanded, Rowland having changed his mind and having decided that the strong-room at the Folly was the best place in which to keep the necklace."

"He has not mentioned the subject to me," I said. "How do you know?"

"I have my emissaries. One thing is certain — little Miss Ripley is to wear the pearls on her wedding-day — and the Italian family, distant relatives of the present Duke of Genoa, to whom the pearls belonged, and from whom they were stolen shortly before the Battle of Agincourt, are again taking active steps to secure them. You have heard the story of the American millionaire? Well, that was a blind—the necklace was in reality to be delivered into the hands of the old family as soon as he had purchased it. Now, Druce, this is the state of things: Madame Sara is an adventuress, and the cleverest woman in the world — Miss Ripley is very young and ignorant. Miss Ripley is to wear the pearls on her wedding-day—and Madame wants them. You can infer the rest."

"What do you want me to do?" I asked.

"Go back and watch. If you see anything to arouse suspicion, wire to me."

"What about telling Rowland?"

"I would rather not consult him. I want to protect Miss Ripley, and at the same time to get Madame into my power. She managed to elude us last time, but she shall not this. My idea is to inveigle her to her ruin. Why, Druce, the woman is being more trusted and run after and admired day by day. She appeals to the greatest foibles of

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the world. She knows some valuable secrets, and is an adept in the art of restoring beauty and to a certain extent conquering the ravages of time. She is at present aided by an Arab, one of the most dangerous men I have ever seen, with the subtlety of a serpent, and legerdemain in every one of his ten fingers. It is not an easy thing to entrap her."

"And yet you mean to do it?"

"Some day—some day. Perhaps now."

His eyes were bright. I had seldom seen him look more excited.

After a short time I left him. Miss Ripley met me at Euston. She was silent and unresponsive and looked depressed. Once I saw her put her hand to her neck.

"Are you in pain?" I asked.

"You might be a doctor, Mr. Druce, from your question."

"But answer me," I said.

She was silent for a minute; then she said, slowly:—

"You are good, and I think I ought to tell you. But will you regard it as a secret? You wonder, perhaps, how it is that I don't wear a low dress in the evening. I will tell you why. On my neck, just below the throat, there grew a wart or mole—large, brown, and ugly. The Italian doctors would not remove it on account of the position. It lies just over what they said was an *aberrant* artery, and the removal might cause very dangerous hæmorrhage. One day Madame saw it; she said the doctors were wrong, and that she could easily take it away and leave no mark behind. I hesitated for a long time, but yesterday, when Lady Kennedy spoke to me as she did, I made up my mind. I wired to Madame and went to her to-day. She gave me chloroform and removed the mole. My neck is bandaged up and it smarts a little. I am not to remove the bandage until she sees me again. She is very pleased with the result, and says that my neck will now be beautiful like other women's, and that I can on the night of the ball wear the lovely Brussels lace dress that Lady Kennedy has given me. That is my secret. Will you respect it?"

I promised, and soon afterwards we reached the end of our journey.

A few days went by. One morning at breakfast I noticed that the little signora only played with her food. An open letter lay by her plate. Rowland, by whose side she always sat, turned to her.

"What is the matter, Antonia?" he said. "Have you had an unpleasant letter?"

"It is from——"

"From whom, dear?"

"Madame Sara."

"What did I hear you say?" cried Lady Kennedy.

"I have had a letter from Madame Sara, Lady Kennedy."

"That shocking woman in the Strand—that adventuress? My dear, is it possible that you know her? Her name is in the mouth of everyone. She is quite notorious."

Instantly the room became full of voices, some talking loudly, some gently, but all praising Madame Sara. Even the men took her part; as to the women, they were unanimous about her charms and her genius.

In the midst of the commotion little Antonia burst into a flood of tears and left the room. Rowland followed her. What next occurred I cannot tell, but in the course of the morning I met Lady Kennedy.

"Well," she said, "that child has won, as I knew she would. Madame Sara wishes to come here, and George says that Antonia's friend is to be invited. I shall be glad when the marriage is over and I can get out of this. It is really detestable that in the last days of my reign I should have to give that woman the *entrée* to the house."

She left me, and I wandered into the entrance hall. There I saw Rowland. He had a telegraph form in his hands, on which some words were written.

"Ah, Druce!" he said. "I am just sending a telegram to the station. What! do you want to send one too?"

For I had seated myself by the table which held the telegraph forms.

"If you don't think I am taking too great a liberty, Rowland," I said, suddenly, "I should like to ask a friend of mine here for a day or two."

"Twenty friends, if you like, my dear Druce. What a man you are to apologize about such a trifle! Who is the special friend?"

"No less a person than Eric Vandeleur, the police-surgeon for Westminster."

"What! Vandeleur—the gayest, jolliest man I have ever met! Would he care to come?"

Rowland's eyes were sparkling with excitement.

"I think so; more especially if you will give me leave to say that you would welcome him."

"Tell him he shall have a thousand welcomes, the best room in the house, the

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best horse. Get him to come by all means, Druce."

Our two telegrams were sent off. In the course of the morning replies in the affirmative came to each.

That evening Madame Sara arrived. She came by the last train. The brougham was sent to meet her. She entered the house shortly before midnight. I was standing in the hall when she arrived, and I felt a momentary sense of pleasure when I saw her start as her eyes met mine. But she was not a woman to be caught off her guard. She approached me at once with outstretched hand and an eager voice.

"This is charming, Mr. Druce," she said. "I do not think anything pleases me more." Then she added, turning to Rowland, "Mr. Dixon Druce is a very old friend of mine."

Rowland gave me a bewildered glance. Madame turned and began to talk to her hostess. Antonia was standing near one of the open drawing-rooms. She had on a soft dress of pale green silk. I had seldom seen a more graceful little creature. But the expression of her face disturbed me. It wore now the fascinated look of a bird when a snake attracts it. Could Madame Sara be the snake? Was Antonia afraid of this woman?

The next day Lady Kennedy came to me with a confidence.

"I am glad your police friend is coming," she said. "It will be safer."

"Vandeleur arrives at twelve o'clock," was my answer.

"Well, I am pleased. I like that woman less and less. I was amazed when she dared to call you her friend."

"Oh, we have met before on business," I answered, guardedly.

"You won't tell me anything further, Mr. Druce?"

"You must excuse me, Lady Kennedy."

"Her assurance is unbounded," continued the good lady. "She has brought a maid or nurse with her—a most extraordinary-looking woman. That, perhaps, is allowable; but she has also brought her black servant, an Arabian, who goes by the name of Achmed. I must say he is a picturesque creature with his quaint Oriental dress. He was all in flaming yellow this morning, and the embroidery on his jacket was worth a small fortune. But it is the daring of the woman that annoys me. She goes on as though she were somebody."

"She is a very emphatic somebody," I could not help replying. "London Society is at her feet."

"I only hope that Antonia will take her remedies and let her go. The woman has no welcome from me," said the indignant mistress of Rowland's Folly.

I did not see anything of Antonia that morning, and at the appointed time I went down to the station to meet Vandeleur. He arrived in high spirits, did not ask a question with regard to Antonia, received the information that Madame Sara was in the house with stolid silence, and seemed intent on the pleasures of the moment.

"Rowland's Folly!" he said, looking round him as we approached one of the finest houses in the whole of Yorkshire. "A folly, truly, and yet a pleasant one, Druce, eh? I fancy," he added, with a slight smile, "that I am going to have a good time here."

"I hope you will disentangle a most tangled skein," was my reply.

He shrugged his shoulders. Suddenly his manner altered.

"Who is that woman?" he said, with a strain of anxiety quite apparent in his voice.

"Who?" I asked.

"That woman on the terrace in nurse's dress."

"I don't know. She has been brought here by Madame Sara—a sort of maid and nurse as well. I suppose poor little Antonia will be put under her charge."

"Don't let her see me, Druce, that's all. Ah, here is our host."

Vandeleur quickened his movements, and the next instant was shaking hands with Rowland.

The rest of the day passed without adventure. I did not see Antonia. She did not even appear at dinner. Rowland, however, assured me that she was taking necessary rest and would be all right on the morrow. He seemed inclined to be gracious to Madame Sara, and was annoyed at his sister's manner to their guest.

Soon after dinner, as I was standing in one of the smoking-rooms, I felt a light hand on my arm, and, turning, encountered the splendid pose and audacious, bright, defiant glance of Madame herself.

"Mr. Druce," she said, "just one moment. It is quite right that you and I should be plain with each other. I know the reason why you are here. You have come for the express purpose of spying upon me and spoiling what you consider my game. But understand, Mr. Druce, that there is danger to yourself when you interfere with the

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schemes of one like me. Forewarned is forearmed."

Someone came into the room and Madame left it.

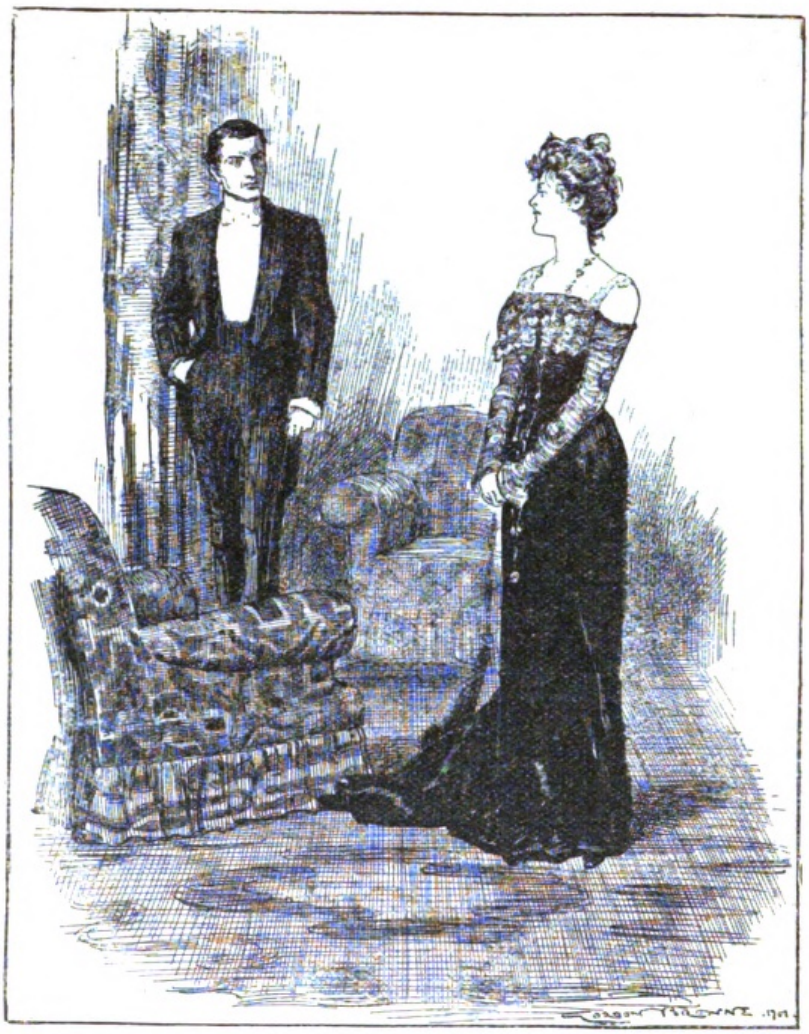
The ball was but a week off, and preparations for the great event were taking place. Attached to the house at the left was a great room built for this purpose.

Rowland and I were walking down this room on a special morning; he was commenting on its architectural merits and telling me what band he intended to have in the musicians' gallery, when Antonia glided into the room.

"How pale you are, little Tonia!" he said.

This was his favourite name for her. He put his hand under her chin, raised her sweet, blushing face, and looked into her eyes.

"Ah, you want my answer. What a persistent little puss it is! You shall have your way, Tonia—yes, certainly. For you I will grant what has never been granted before. All the same, what will my lady say?"



"FOREWARNED IS FOREARMED."

He shrugged his shoulders.

"But you will let me wear them whether she is angry or not?" persisted Antonia.

"Yes, child, I have said it."

She took his hand and raised it to her lips, then, with a curtsy, tripped out of the room.

"A rare, bright little bird," he said, turning to me. "Do you know, I feel that I have done an extraordinarily good thing for myself in securing little Antonia. No troublesome mamma-in-law—no brothers and sisters, not my own and yet emphatically mine to consider—just the child herself. I am very happy and a very lucky fellow. I am glad my little girl has no past history. She is just her dear little, dainty self, no more and no less."

"What did she want with you now?" I asked.

"Little witch," he said, with a laugh. "The pearls—*the* pearls. She insists on wearing the great necklace on the night of the ball. Dear little girl. I can fancy how the baubles will gleam and shine on her fair throat."

I made no answer, but I was certain that little Antonia's request did not emanate from herself. I thought that I would search for Vandeleur and tell him of the circumstance, but the next remark of Rowland's nipped my project in the bud.

"By the way, your friend has promised to be back for dinner. He left here early this morning."

"Vandeleur?" I cried.

"Yes, he has gone to town. What a first-rate fellow he is!"

"He tells a good story," I answered.

"Capital. Who would suspect him of being the greatest criminal expert of the day? But, thank goodness, we have no need of his services at Rowland's Folly."

Late in the evening Vandeleur returned. He entered the house just before dinner. I

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observed by the brightness of his eyes and the intense gravity of his manner that he was satisfied with himself. This in his case was always a good sign. At dinner he was his brightest self, courteous to everyone, and to Madame Sara in particular.

Late that night, as I was preparing to go to bed, he entered my room without knocking.

"Well, Druce," he said, "it is all right."

"All right!" I cried; "what do you mean?"

"You will soon know. The moment I saw that woman I had my suspicions. I was in town to-day making some very interesting inquiries. I am primed now on every point. Expect a *dénouement* of a startling character very soon, but be sure of one thing—however black appearances may be the little bride is safe, and so are the pearls."

He left me without waiting for my reply.

The next day passed, and the next. I seemed to live on tenter-hooks. Little Antonia was gay and bright like a bird. Madame's invitation had been extended by Lady Kennedy at Rowland's command to the day after the ball—little Antonia skipped when she heard it.

"I love her," said the girl.

More and more guests arrived—the days flew on wings—the evenings were lively. Madame was a power in herself. Vandeleur was another. These two, sworn foes at heart, aided and abetted each other to make things go brilliantly for the rest of the guests. Rowland was in the highest spirits.

At last the evening before the ball came and went. Vandeleur's *grand coup* had not come off. I retired to bed as usual. The night was a stormy one—rain rattled against the window-panes, the wind sighed and shuddered. I had just put out my candle and was about to seek forgetfulness in sleep when once again in his unceremonious fashion Vandeleur burst into my room.

"I want you at once, Druce, in the bedroom of Madame Sara's servant. Get into your clothes as fast as you possibly can and join me there."

He left the room as abruptly as he had entered it. I hastily dressed, and with stealthy steps, in the dead of night, to the accompaniment of the ever-increasing tempest, sought the room in question.

I found it brightly lighted; Vandeleur pacing the floor as though he himself were the very spirit of the storm; and, most astonishing sight of all, the nurse whom Madame Sara had brought to Rowland's Folly, and whose name I had never happened to hear, gagged and bound in a chair drawn into the centre of the room.

"So I think that is all, nurse," said Vandeleur, as I entered. "Pray take a chair, Druce. We quite understand each other, don't we, nurse, and the facts are wonderfully simple. Your name as entered in the archives of crime at Westminster is not as you have given out, Mary Jessop, but Rebecca Curt. You escaped from Portland prison on the night of November 30th, just a year ago. You could not have managed your escape but for the connivance of the lady in whose service you are now. Your crime was forgery, with a strong and very daring attempt at poisoning. Your victim was a harmless invalid lady. Your knowledge of crime, therefore, is what may be called extensive. There are yet eleven years of your sentence to run. You have doubtless served Madame Sara well—but perhaps you can serve me better. You know the consequence if you refuse, for I explained that to you frankly and clearly before this gentleman came into the room. Druce, will you oblige me—will you lock the door while I remove the gag from the prisoner's mouth?"

I hurried to obey. The woman breathed more freely when the gag was removed. Her face was a swarthy red all over. Her crooked eyes favoured us with many shifty glances.

"Now, then, have the goodness to begin, Rebecca Curt," said Vandeleur. "Tell us everything you can."

She swallowed hard, and said:—

"You have forced me——"

"We won't mind that part," interrupted Vandeleur. "The story, please, Mrs. Curt."

If looks could kill, Rebecca Curt would have killed Vandeleur then. He gave her in return a gentle, bland glance, and she started on her narrative.

"Madame knows a secret about Antonia Ripley."

"Of what nature?"

"It concerns her parentage."

"And that is——?"

The woman hesitated and writhed.

"The names of her parents, please," said Vandeleur, in a voice cold as ice and hard as iron.

"Her father was Italian by birth."

"His name?"

"Count Gioletti. He was unhappily

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"WE QUITE UNDERSTAND EACH OTHER, DON'T WE, NURSE?"

married, and stabbed his English wife in an access of jealousy when Antonia was three years old. He was executed for the crime on the 20th of June, 18—. The child was adopted and taken out of the country by an English lady who was present in court—her name was Mrs. Studley. Madame Sara was also present. She was much interested in the trial, and had an interview afterwards with Mrs. Studley. It was arranged that Antonia should be called by the surname of Ripley—the name of an old relative of Mrs. Studley's—and that her real name and history were never to be told to her."

"I understand," said Vandeleur, gently. "This is of deep interest, is it not, Druce?"

I nodded, too much absorbed in watching the face of the woman to have time for words.

"But now," continued Vandeleur, "there are reasons why Madame should change her mind with regard to keeping the matter a close secret—is that not so, Mrs. Curt?"

"Yes," said Mrs. Curt.

"You will have the kindness to continue."

"Madame has an object—she blackmails the signora. She wants to get the signora completely into her power."

"Indeed! Is she succeeding?"

"Yes."

"How has she managed? Be very careful what you say, please."

"The mode is subtle—the young lady had a disfiguring mole or wart on her neck, just below the throat. Madame removed the mole."

"Quite a simple process, I doubt not," said Vandeleur, in a careless tone.

"Yes, it was done easily—I was present. The young lady was conducted into a chamber with a red light."

Vandeleur's extraordinary eyes suddenly leapt into fire. He took a chair and drew it so close to Mrs. Curt's that his face was within a foot or two of hers.

"Now, you will be very careful what you say," he remarked. "You know the consequence to yourself unless this narrative is absolutely reliable."

She began to tremble, but continued:—

"I was present at the operation. Not a single ray of ordinary light was allowed to penetrate. The patient was put under chloroform. The mole was removed. Afterwards Madame wrote something on her neck. The words were very small and neatly done—they formed a cross on the

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young lady's neck. Afterwards I heard what they were."

"Repeat them."

"I can't. You will know in the moment of victory."

"I choose to know now. A detective from my division at Westminster comes here early to-morrow morning—he brings handcuffs—and——"



"MADAME WROTE SOMETHING ON HER NECK."

"I will tell you," interrupted the woman. "The words were these:—

"'I AM THE DAUGHTER OF PAOLO GIOLETTI, WHO WAS EXECUTED FOR THE MURDER OF MY MOTHER, JUNE 20TH, 18—.'"

"How were the words written?"

"With nitrate of silver."

"Fiend!" muttered Vandeleur.

He jumped up and began to pace the room. I had never seen his face so black with ungovernable rage.

"You know what this means?" he said at last to me. "Nitrate of silver eats into the flesh and is permanent. Once exposed to the light the case is hopeless, and the helpless child becomes her own executioner."

The nurse looked up restlessly.

"The operation was performed in a room with a red light," she said, "and up to the present the words have not been seen. Unless the young lady exposes her neck to the blue rays of ordinary light they never will be. In order to give her a chance to keep her deadly secret Madame has had a large carbuncle of the deepest red cut and prepared. It is in the shape of a cross, and is suspended to a fine gold, almost invisible, thread. This the signora is to wear when in full evening dress. It will keep in its place, for the back of the cross will be dusted with gum."

"But it cannot be Madame's aim to hide the fateful words," said Vandeleur. "You are concealing something, nurse."

Her face grew an ugly red. After a pause the following words came out with great reluctance:—

"The young lady wears the carbuncle as a reward."

"Ah," said Vandeleur, "now we are beginning to see daylight. As a reward for what?"

"Madame wants something which the signora can give her. It is a case of exchange; the carbuncle which hides the fatal secret is given in exchange for that which the signora can transfer to Madame."

"I understand at last," said Vandeleur. "Really, Druce, I feel myself privileged to say that of all the malevolent——" he broke off abruptly. "Never mind," he said, "we are keeping nurse. Nurse, you have answered all my questions with praiseworthy exactitude, but before you return to your well-earned slumbers I have one more piece of information to seek from you. Was it entirely by Miss Ripley's desire, or was it in any respect owing to Madame Sara's instigations, that the young lady is permitted to wear the pearl necklace on the night of the dance? You have, of course, nurse, heard of the pearl necklace?"

Rebecca Curt's face showed that she undoubtedly had.

"I see you are acquainted with that most interesting story. Now, answer my question. The request to wear the necklace to-morrow night was suggested by Madame, was it not?"

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"Ah, yes—yes!" cried the woman, carried out of herself by sudden excitement. "It was to that point all else tended — all, all!"

"Thank you, that will do. You understand that from this day you are absolutely in my service. As long as you serve me faithfully you are safe."

"I will do my best, sir," she replied, in a modest tone, her eyes seeking the ground.

The moment we were alone Vandeleur turned to me.

"Things are simplifying themselves," he said.

"I fail to understand," was my answer. "I should say that complications, and alarming ones, abound."

"Nevertheless, I see my way clear. Druce, it is not good for you to be so long out of bed, but in order that you may repose soundly when you return to your room I will tell you frankly what my mode of operations will be to-morrow. The simplest plan would be to tell Rowland everything, but for various reasons that does not suit me. I take an interest in the little girl, and if she chooses to conceal her secret (at present, remember, she does not know it, but the poor child will certainly be told everything to-morrow) I don't intend to interfere. In the second place, I am anxious to lay a trap for Madame. Now, two things are evident. Madame Sara's object in coming here is to steal the pearls. Her plan is to terrify the little signora into giving them to her in order that the fiendish words written on the child's neck may not be seen. As the signora must wear a dress with a low neck to-morrow night, she can only hide the words by means of the red carbuncle. Madame will only give her the carbuncle if she, in exchange, gives Madame the pearls. You see?"

"I do," I answered, slowly.

He drew himself up to his slender height, and his eyes became full of suppressed laughter.

"The child's neck has been injured with nitrate of silver. Nevertheless, until it is exposed to the blue rays of light the ominous, fiendish words will not appear on her white throat. Once they do appear they will be indelible. Now, listen! Madame, with all her cunning, forgot something. To the action of nitrate of silver there is an antidote. This is nothing more or less than our old friend cyanide of potassium. To-morrow nurse, under my instructions, will take the little patient into a room carefully prepared with the hateful red light, and will bathe the neck just where the baleful words are written with a solution of cyanide of potassium. The nitrate of silver will then become neutralized and the letters will never come out."

"But the child will not know that. The terror of Madame's cruel story will be upon her, and she will exchange the pearls for the cross."

"I think not, for I shall be there to prevent it. Now, Druce, I have told you all that is necessary. Go to bed and sleep comfortably."

The next morning dawned dull and sullen, but the fierce storm of the night before was over. The ravages which had taken place, however, in the stately old park were very manifest, for trees had been torn up by their roots and some of the stateliest and largest of the oaks had been deprived of their best branches.

Little Miss Ripley did not appear at all that day. I was not surprised at her absence. The time had come when doubtless Madame found it necessary to divulge her awful scheme to the unhappy child. In the midst of that gay houseful of people no one specially missed her; even Rowland was engaged with many necessary matters, and had little time to devote to his future wife. The ball-room, decorated with real flowers, was a beautiful sight.

Vandeleur, our host, and I paced up and down the long room. Rowland was in great excitement, making many suggestions, altering this decoration and the other. The flowers were too profuse in one place, too scanty in another. The lights, too, were not bright enough.

"By all means have the ball-room well lighted," said Vandeleur. "In a room like this, so large, and with so many doors leading into passages and sitting-out rooms, it is well to have the light as brilliant as possible. You will forgive my suggestion, Mr. Rowland, when I say I speak entirely from the point of view of a man who has some acquaintance with the treacherous dealings of crime."

Rowland started.

"Are you afraid that an attempt will be made here to-night to steal the necklace?" he asked, suddenly.

"We won't talk of it," replied Vandeleur. "Act on my suggestion and you have nothing to fear."

Rowland shrugged his shoulders, and crossing the room gave some directions to

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several men who were putting in the final touches.

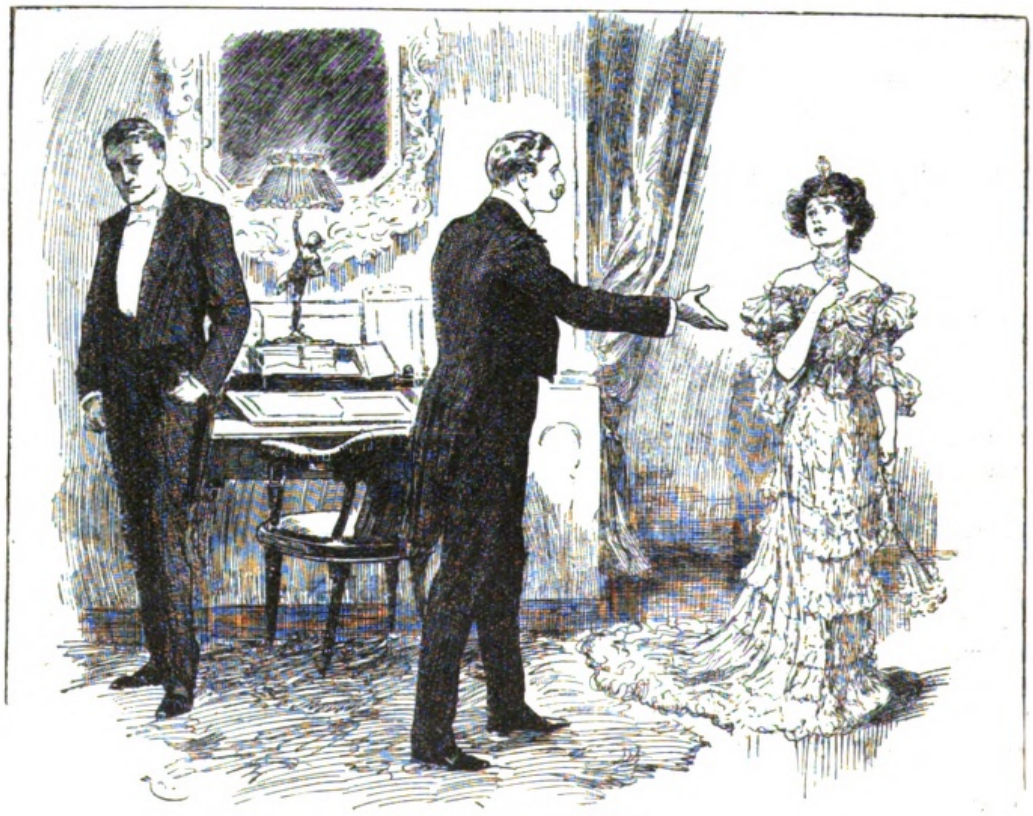
Nearly a hundred guests were expected to arrive from the surrounding country, and the house was as full as it could possibly hold. Rowland was to open the ball with little Antonia.

There was no late dinner that day, and as evening approached Vandeleur sought me.

"I say, Druce, dress as early as you can, and come down and meet me in our host's study."

I looked at him in astonishment, but did not question him. I saw that he was intensely excited. His face was cold and stern; it invariably wore that expression when he was most moved.

I hurried into my evening clothes and came down again. Vandeleur was standing in the study talking to Rowland. The guests were beginning to arrive. The musicians were tuning-up in the adjacent ball-room, and signs of hurry and festival pervaded the entire place. Rowland was in high spirits and looked very handsome. He and Vandeleur talked together, and I stood a little apart. Vandeleur was just about to make a light reply to one of our host's questions when we heard the swish of drapery in the passage outside, and little Antonia, dressed for her first ball, entered. She was in soft white lace, and her neck and arms were bare. The effect of her entrance was somewhat startling, and would have arrested attention even were we not all specially interested in her. Her face, neck, and arms were nearly as white as her dress, her dark eyes were much dilated, and her soft black hair surrounded her small face like a shadow. In the midst of the whiteness a large red cross sparkled on her throat like living fire. Rowland uttered an exclamation and then stood still; as for Vandeleur and myself, we held our breath in suspense. What might not the next few minutes reveal?



"WHAT IS IT, LITTLE ONE?"

It was the look on Antonia's face that aroused our fears. What ailed her? She came forward like one blind, or as one who walks in her sleep. One hand was held out slightly in advance, as though she meant to guide herself by the sense of touch. She certainly saw neither Vandeleur nor me, but when she got close to Rowland the blind expression left her eyes. She gave a sudden and exceedingly bitter cry, and ran forward, flinging herself into his arms.

"Kiss me once before we part for ever. Kiss me just once before we part," she said.

"My dear little one," I heard him answer,

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"what is the meaning of this? You are not well. There, Antonia, cease trembling. Before we part, my dear? But there is no thought of parting. Let me look at you, darling. Ah!"

He held her at arm's length and gazed at her critically.

"No girl could look sweeter, Antonia," he said, "and you have come now for the finishing touch—the beautiful pearls. But what is this, my dear? Why should you spoil your white neck with anything so incongruous? Let me remove it."

She put up her hand to her neck, thus covering the crimson cross. Then her wild eyes met Vandeleur's. She seemed to recognise his presence for the first time.

"You can safely remove it," he said to her, speaking in a semi-whisper.

Rowland gave him an astonished glance. His look seemed to say, "Leave us," but Vandeleur did not move.

"We must see this thing out," he said to me.

Meanwhile Rowland's arm encircled Antonia's neck, and his hand sought for the clasp of the narrow gold thread that held the cross in place.

"One moment," said Antonia.

She stepped back a pace; the trembling in her voice left it, it gathered strength, her fear gave way to dignity. This was the hour of her deepest humiliation, and yet she looked noble.

"My dearest," she said, "my kindest and best of friends. I had yielded to temptation, terror made me weak, the dread of losing you unnerved me, but I won't come to you charged with a sin on my conscience; I won't conceal anything from you. I know you won't wish me *now* to become your wife; nevertheless, you shall know the truth."

"What do you mean, Antonia? What do your strange words signify? Are you mad?" said George Rowland.

"No, I wish I were; but I am no mate for you; I cannot bring dishonour to your honour. Madame said it could be hidden, that this"—she touched the cross—"would hide it. For this I was to pay—yes, to pay a shameful price. I consented, for the terror was so cruel. But I—I came here and looked into your face and I could not do it. Madame shall have her blood-red cross back and you shall know all. You shall see."

With a fierce gesture she tore the cross from her neck and flung it on the floor.

"The pearls for this," she cried; "the pearls were the price; but I would rather you knew. Take me up to the brightest light and you will see for yourself."

Rowland's face wore an expression impossible to fathom. The red cross lay on the floor; Antonia's eyes were fixed on his. She was no child to be humoured; she was a woman and despair was driving her wild. When she said, "Take me up to the brightest light," he took her hand without a word and led her to where the full rays of a powerful electric light turned the place into day.

"Look!" cried Antonia, "look! Madame wrote it here—here."

She pointed to her throat.

"The words are hidden, but this light will soon cause them to appear. You will see for yourself, you will know the truth. At last you will understand who I really am."

There was silence for a few minutes. Antonia kept pointing to her neck. Rowland's eyes were fixed upon it. After a breathless period of agony Vandeleur stepped forward.

"Miss Antonia," he cried, "you have suffered enough. I am in a position to relieve your terrors. You little guessed, Rowland, that for the last few days I have taken an extreme liberty with regard to you. I have been in your house simply and solely in the exercise of my professional qualities. In the exercise of my manifest duties I came across a ghastly secret. Miss Antonia was to be subjected to a cruel ordeal. Madame Sara, for reasons of her own, had invented one of the most fiendish plots it has ever been my unhappy lot to come across. But I have been in time. Miss Antonia, you need fear nothing. Your neck contains no ghastly secret. Listen! I have saved you. The nurse whom Madame believed to be devoted to her service considered it best for prudential reasons to transfer herself to me. Under my directions she bathed your neck today with a preparation of cyanide of potassium. You do not know what that is, but it is a chemical preparation which neutralizes the effect of what that horrible woman has done. You have nothing to fear—your secret lies buried beneath your white skin."

"But what is the mystery?" said Rowland. "Your actions, Antonia, and your words, Vandeleur, are enough to drive a man mad. What is it all about? I will know."

"Miss Ripley can tell you or not, as she pleases," replied Vandeleur. "The unhappy child was to be blackmailed, Madame Sara's object being to secure the pearl necklace worth a King's ransom. The cross was to be

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given in exchange for the necklace. That was her aim, but she is defeated. Ask me no questions, sir. If this young lady chooses to tell you, well and good, but if not the secret is her own."

Vandeleur bowed and backed towards me.

"The secret is mine," cried Antonia, "but it also shall be yours, George. I will not be your wife with this ghastly thing between us. You may never speak to me again, but you shall know all the truth."

"Upon my word, a brave girl, and I respect her," whispered Vandeleur. "Come, Druce, our work so far as Miss Antonia is concerned is finished."

We left the room.

"Now to see Madame Sara," continued my friend. "We will go to her rooms. Walls have ears in her case; she doubtless knows the whole *dénouement* already; but we will find her at once, she can scarcely have escaped yet."

He flew upstairs. I followed him. We went from one corridor to another. At last we found Madame's apartments. Her bedroom door stood wide open. Rebecca Curt was standing in the middle of the room. Madame herself was nowhere to be seen, but there was every sign of hurried departure.

"Where is Madame Sara?" inquired Vandeleur, in a peremptory voice.

Rebecca Curt shrugged her shoulders.

"Has she gone down? Is she in the ball-room? Speak!" said Vandeleur.

The nurse gave another shrug.

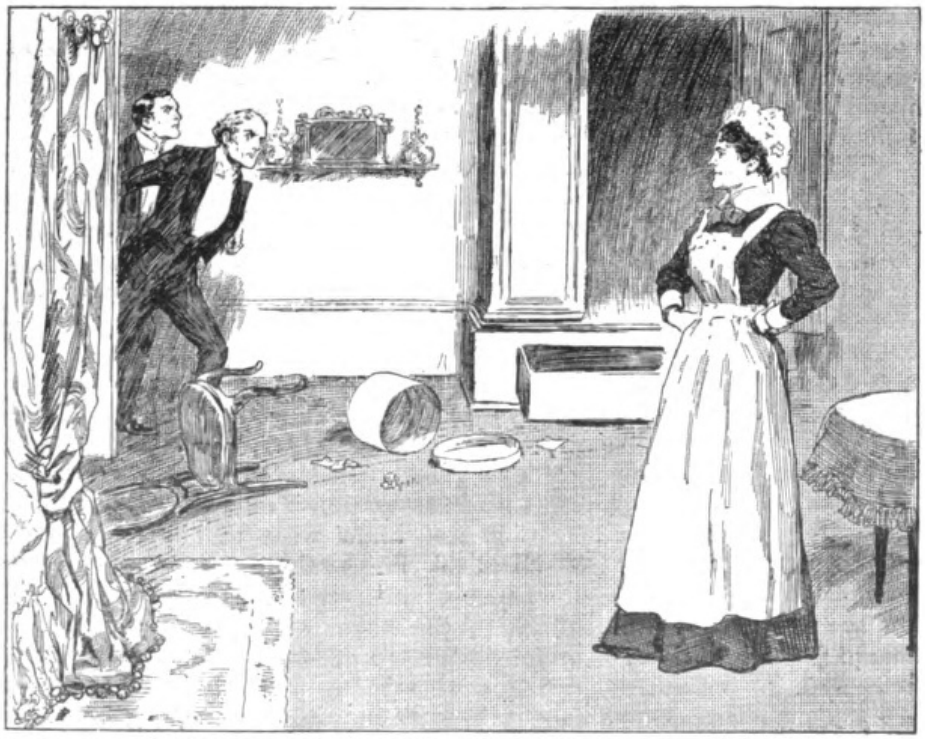
"I only know that Achmed the Arabian rushed in here a few minutes ago," was her answer. "He was excited. He said something to Madame. I think he had been listening—eavesdropping, you call it. Madame was convulsed with rage. She thrust a few things together and she's gone. Perhaps you can catch her."

Vandeleur's face turned white.

"I'll have a try," he said. "Don't keep me, Druce."

He rushed away. I don't know what immediate steps he took, but he did not return to Rowland's Folly. Neither was Madame Sara captured.

But notwithstanding her escape and her meditated crime, notwithstanding little Antonia's hour of terror, the ball went on merrily, and the bride-elect opened it with her future husband. On her fair neck gleamed the pearls, lovely in their soft lustre. What she told Rowland was never known; how he took the news is a secret between Antonia and himself. But one thing is certain: no one was more gallant in his conduct, more ardent in his glances of love, than was the master of Rowland's Folly that night. They were married on the day fixed, and Madame Sara was defeated.



"REBECCA CURT WAS STANDING IN THE MIDDLE OF THE ROOM."

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From Behind the Speaker's Chair.

LXXVIII.

(VIEWED BY HENRY W. LUCY.)

THE JOURNALS OF THE HOUSE.

GENTLEMEN of England who sit at home at ease reading their morning paper containing columns of Parliamentary report, little reck of another record of Parliamentary proceedings painstakingly compiled, in due time stoutly bound, and stored in the Palace of Westminster. These are the Journals of the House of Commons, to-day compiled by the Clerks of the Table as they were by their predecessors 300 years ago. Lining the long corridor of the House of Commons, which cuts across the building from the Lobby where the bust of Cromwell surveys the scene to the door of the office of the Speaker's Secretary, the calf-bound volumes stand row on row chronicling in severely simple style the history of England. Beginning long before morning newspapers were established, holding the field at a time when the reporting of debates in Parliament was a criminal offence, these musty volumes tell the tale of the Sessions in unbroken continuity. Rarely opened, their existence known only to comparatively few, they plod along adding yearly to their bulk, scrupulously preserving in this twentieth century the manner of writing and of printing observed in the seventeenth.



MR. SPEAKER TAKING THE OATH.

THE KING'S ACCESSION.

Here is a transcript, capital letters and italics duly preserved, of record of a historic event under date Wednesday, 23rd January, 1901: "IT having pleased Almighty God to take to His mercy our late Most Gracious Sovereign Lady Queen *Victoria* of blessed memory, who departed this life yesterday between the hours of Six and Seven of the clock in the evening, at *Osborne House*, in the *Isle of Wight*; and Her late Majesty's Most Honourable Privy Council, and others, having met this day at *Saint James's Palace*, and having directed that His Royal Highness *Albert Edward* Prince of *Wales* be proclaimed King To-morrow at Nine of the clock, by the Style and Title of *Edward* the Seventh: At Four of the clock the House met pursuant to the Statute made in the Sixth year of the reign of Her late Majesty Queen *Anne*, intituled, 'An Act for the Security of Her Majesty's Person and Government, and of the Succession to the Crown of *Great Britain* in the Protestant Line.' And Mr. Speaker and several other Members (*Francis Broxholm Grey Jenkinson*, Esquire, C.B., and *Arthur William Nicholson*, Esquire, the Clerks Assistant, and the other Clerks attending according to their duty) came into the House, whereupon Mr. Speaker first alone, standing upon the upper step of the Chair, took and subscribed the Oath required by Law. Then several Members took and subscribed the Oath; and several Members made and subscribed the Affirmation required by Law."

With the exception of one line this is, with variation of date and proper name, a copy of the entry recording the death of British Sovereigns since the Restoration. The variation appears in the concluding line, where the fact that several members made affirmation instead of taking the Oath is recorded.

"AND THEN."

In the "Thousand and One Nights" each chapter concludes with a certain monotony. The break of day always interrupts Scheherazade at the most critical point in her story, and is recorded in a phrase that varies slightly in form. A similar peculiarity marks the Journals of the House of Commons. Save towards the end of the Session, when by special order the House is adjourned without question put, a Minister moves the adjournment as soon as the business on the paper has been disposed of. The last daily entry in the Journals of the House uses a formula more precise in its repetition even than the scheming Scheherazade's welcome of the daylight that brought her fresh respite. Taking the

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entry of the 15th of February, for example, it is written: "And then the House having continued to sit till one minute after twelve of the clock on Friday morning, adjourned till this day."

With necessary variation of hour and day, that through the centuries is the last thing written in the Journal of a sitting of the House of Commons. About the "And then" there is discernible a touch of grateful relief on the part of the Clerk at the close of a more or less laborious sitting.

"THE YEAS HAVE IT."

Another peculiarity of diction in the Journals is found in the formula recording divisions. When the Speaker calls a division he says, "The ayes to the right the noes to the left." In far-off times, some dead and forgotten Clerk of the House of Commons recording such an event naturally dropped into the vernacular of his quiet home or the busy street. He accordingly wrote, "The House divided, the yeas to the right the noes to the left." Adding the figures he concluded the entry with the cooing remark, "So it passed in the negative," or in the affirmative, as the case might be.

These are small things but their touch carries us far back, realizing in a flash the antiquity of the mother of Parliaments.

A SPLENDID ADVERTISEMENT.

In the volume from which I quote, being the 156th, there appears a valuable hint to members about to bring on questions of breach of privilege. In the closing days of the Session of 1901, the *Globe* frankly discussed some recent performance of the Irish members under the heading "Irish Rowdies." Had the incident been ignored by the persons affronted it would have passed into comparative obscurity and by this time been forgotten. Like most people habitually prone to make violent personal attacks on others, the Irish members are quick to resent approach to reprisals. Desirous above all things to vindicate order and to resent the use of strong language, Mr. John Dillon brought the article under the notice of the House as a breach of privilege. It was accordingly read at the Table of the House, with the immediate consequence that the offensive lines were republished by every paper in the kingdom, the publication complained of being increased a thousandfold.



MR. DILLON ON THE "GLOBE."

But the *Globe* received another and more permanent advertisement. In accordance with usage, order was made that the offending article should be entered in the Journals of the House. There it stands at this day, and there it will remain for all time, showing how some publicists, writing in the first year of the new century, regarded the Irish members as "political mercenaries from the Sister Isle," and regretted "their recent outrageous behaviour."

PHOTOGRAPHER EXTRAORDINARY.

A good deal is heard from time to time of Sir Benjamin Stone's collection of photographs relating to Parliamentary life. The photographs taken on the Terrace of the House of Commons, multitudinous as they are, form only a section of this unique collection. Like Ulysses, much has Sir Benjamin travelled, much of men and cities has he seen. Before he entered the House as member for East Birmingham he visited Japan, China, the Straits Settlements, Asia Minor, the West Indies, the Rocky Mountains, Vancouver, and the River Amazon, not to mention ordinary accomplishment in the way of historic places on the Continent of Europe. Wherever he went he carried with him his camera, bringing home photographs of whatever he saw. Nor are these of the ordinary snap-shot character common to Cook's tourists. They are works of art, skilful use of the platinum process giving them the appearance rather of engravings than of photographs. The fact is, if Sir Benjamin had not been dazzled by the dignity of being five times Mayor of Sutton-Coldfield, he would have been—perhaps he is—the most successful photographist of the age.

In addition to being an artistic photographer he is a practised writer, having recorded in several volumes his travels in Japan, Brazil, Spain, and Norway. His practice, extended over many years, has been that when he takes

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a photograph of a memorable scene or a distinguished person he writes a descriptive note, which is affixed to the picture when it is stored away and catalogued. The consequence is that his collection, which now numbers 25,000 separate plates, is an unparalleled pictorial history of the world.

AN INTERESTING BEQUEST.

It is well to know that this rare achievement will not be lost to the public and to posterity. Sir Benjamin tells me he has bequeathed the collection to the care of trustees, with direction to take whatever steps they in their judgment think best calculated to add to the instruction and entertainment of the public. Whether the pictures, with personal notes or descriptions of scenery, shall be published in book form, or whether they shall be deposited in some public institution, is a matter Sir Benjamin leaves to the unfettered discretion of the trustees. Amongst the series of pictures of immediate home interest are photographs of every part of the interior of the structure of the Palace of Westminster. The Tower of London has been dealt with in the same minute and masterly fashion.



SIR B. STONE POSING A SUBJECT.

One of the most beautiful and impressive among the multitudinous pictures is one of which I possess a cherished copy. It shows the last halt of Mr. Gladstone on his way to burial in Westminster Abbey. It was taken early on the morning of the 5th June, 1898. Westminster Hall is empty, save for the coffin set in its midst, on which the early morning light falls softly through the lofty windows set in their place when Richard II. was King.

During the summer Session Sir Benjamin Stone had a rich harvest of celebrities in the foreign, Indian, and Colonial celebrities coming over for the Coronation. His studio is a portion of the Terrace belonging to the deserted section pertaining to the House of Lords. With quick artistic eye he discovered the usefulness of the accessory of a wrought-iron gateway opening on to the Terrace. With this background his subjects are posed. It is a memorable procession, including all the more famous past and present members who have held seats during the last seven years. In addition is the fringe of foreign notabilities who flock to the Lobby of the House of Commons. The latest photograph of Mr. Chamberlain was taken by Sir Benjamin on the day peace was signed at Pretoria.

IN COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY.

One of the best of the new Rules of Procedure was quietly established when, some Sessions ago, Mr. Arthur Balfour carried the Standing Order which sets apart a certain number of days upon which Supply shall be considered in Committee. Practically this amounts to one day per week through an average Session. The work begins as soon as the Address is voted and Supply can be set up. Previous to the passing of this Standing Order, Committee of Supply was at the mercy of all other business. Bills mentioned in the Speech from the Throne absorbed Government time till after Whitsuntide.

With the end of the Session in view, it began to be felt that really something must be done with Supply. Night after night was set apart for the work, members not going home till morning. It was the fag end of the Session, when energy was sapped and obstruction by Irish members, or any other organized minority, was dominant. The situation was unmistakably clear. The month of August had been entered upon. A large number of members wanted to clear out by the 12th. But there were so many scores of votes to be passed before the adjournment. No supply, no holiday. The only thing to be done was for the two parties, the majority and the minority, doggedly to settle down and see which could wear the other out. Incidentally a vote was passed. In the end the closure was invoked, and, amid angry scenes, millions of public money were voted.

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A FOILED REFORM.

Under the new system opportunity is provided for adequately discussing every vote. The work is commenced early in the Session in circumstances calculated to make easy its businesslike dispatch. But it must be confessed that the new system, admirably conceived, is not a success. This is demonstrated by a simple statement of fact. The total number of votes dealt with in Committee of Supply during the earlier part of this Session was 150. On the 4th of August, twenty-two days having been occupied in discussion, 63, less than one-half, had been carried. There remained 87, which, with the assistance of automatic closure, must needs be disposed of at a single sitting. Obviously, either the dealing with 63 votes had been elaborately dilatory, or the rushing through of 87 votes in a single sitting was grotesquely hurried.



MR. BALFOUR'S STANDING ORDER.

The system is all right. What paralyzes it is survival of the habit of verbosity, the indulgence in self-advertising that has during the last twenty-five years with increasing strength and persistence afflicted Parliament. I am afraid it must be admitted that the intrinsically excellent rearrangement of the sitting which sets the House actually to work not later than three o'clock in the afternoon is responsible for fatal waste of time. When a member gets on his legs anywhere between three o'clock and 5.30, he feels it is so nice and early that he may as well make the most of his opportunity. If members going before have spoken over an hour, he owes it to his constituency at least to keep up with the record, or, better still, beat it by five or ten minutes.



"STOP THIEF."

More than once during the earlier part of the Session Mr. John Dillon, called on early in debate, has appropriated for his own share a fraction under two hours of a sitting whose full length could not possibly exceed four and a half. This is not debate. It is, in a criminal sense, flat burglary, forcible appropriation of the just share of opportunity pertaining to other Irish members. In three sittings Mr. Dillon has appropriated to what, using the phrase in the strictly Parliamentary sense, may be described as "his own cheek" more hours and minutes than on Monday, August 4th, remained to 670 members to discuss 87 votes involving expenditure of many millions of the taxpayers' money. To cite that fact is to admit the breakdown of the carefully and, as far as it goes, sagaciously amended system of Committee of Supply.

WASTING TIME.

The banality of Committee of Supply is crowned on the last allotted night by the performance in the Lobby. It is ordered that at ten o'clock members shall "cut the cackle and come to the 'osses." In other words, there is to be no more speech-making. But there remains the privilege of voting "aye" or "no" when a vote is submitted. To begin with, it was necessary to commit to the ordeal of the Division Lobby every single vote remaining on the list. Now they are arranged in classes, and put from the Chair in sections. But the process is long enough to keep grave and reverend senators (and some others) marching round and round the Division Lobby for three hours on a summer night.

The attraction of this performance it only too obvious. Perhaps the meaness form of Parliamentary ambition is to stand high on the list of members

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taking part in divisions. It finds its parallel in the painstaking endeavour of the member who seeks the bubble reputation of being the first man to take his seat on the opening night of a Session. For men lax in attendance through the Session, the working of the guillotine on the night when Supply is cleared off is a splendid opportunity for bringing up their average. You can get four divisions of the House of Commons through in an hour. If members are brisk and the lobbies not blocked, five may be hurried through. Thus, in three hours, a member in good condition may run up a score of from twelve to fifteen divisions, representing the average accomplishment of a fortnight or three weeks in mid-Session.

A YOUNG IMPERIALIST.

Talking about the charge of inconsistency brought against him, seeing that he, once the risen hope of the Radical party, is now the chief buttress of a Ministry of strong Imperialistic tendencies, Mr. Chamberlain tells me a curious and interesting story. Forty-five years ago he, having just reached his majority, took an active part in canvassing Birmingham against Mr. John Bright. The great Corn Leaguer, then ousted from Manchester, was his *beau ideal* of a political leader save in one respect. Mr. Bright was directly antagonistic to what in these days has come to be called Imperialism.

It was the year of the China War. The situation is vividly described by Lord Palmerston in his address to the electors of Tiverton: "An insolent barbarian, breathing authority at Canton, violated the British Flag, broke the engagements of treaties, offered rewards for the heads of British subjects in that part of China, and planned their destruction by murder, assassination, and poison." After describing how a vote of censure on the Government was "carried by a combination of political parties not till this last Session united," Lord Palmerston asks, "Will the British nation give their support to men who have thus endeavoured to make the humiliation and degradation of their country the stepping-stone to power?"

Young Joseph Chamberlain, in a voice not then familiar in public life, emphatically answered "No," and did his best to prevent Birmingham affording John Bright sanctuary after being driven from Manchester on account of his hostility to Lord Palmerston. Thus was the political child father of the Imperialist statesman of to-day.

FRANK LOCKWOOD.

Wherever two or three lawyers are gathered together, stories about Frank Lockwood still crop up. His oldest friends, his warmest admirers at the Bar, admit that soundness of knowledge on difficult points of law was not his especial gift or the basis of his high reputation. Of equity he knew hardly anything, a circumstance that did not prevent his accepting a brief involving equity rules and principles.

With one such in his hand, he was arguing one day when the judge, who knew his weak point, blandly said, "Which do you think, Mr. Lockwood, is the case bearing most directly upon your line of argument?"

"My lord," said Lockwood, "there are so many cases in my mind I do not like to discriminate."

He later got out of a similar difficulty in a case involving an alleged breach of patent. The counsel on the other side, most learned in the matter, talked fluently about various kinds of dynamos. Lockwood, as one of his friends in court remarked, wouldn't have known one dynamo from another if he had met them walking arm in arm along Pall Mall. In this dilemma he turned towards the jury with flushed face, and indignantly said, "Dynamos! What, gentlemen, do we care about these things? Let us get at the truth."

I do not know whether he got at the truth. He certainly got his verdict.

The third story relates to a judge, now gone to a higher court, who had an ineradicable, embarrassing habit of interrupting counsel. One day he was so aggravating that Lockwood, who was addressing the jury, ventured upon respectful remonstrance.

"Well, well," said the judge, "I shall reserve my remarks till I sum up."

"Yes, my lord," said Lockwood, quietly; "that, I believe, is the usual course."

Some years ago I shared with Frank Lockwood the honour of being the guest of the Sheffield Press Club at their annual dinner. I remember the twinkle in his eye that flashed over a little aside in a speech responding to the toast of his health. Alluding to his long connection with Sheffield in the capacity of Recorder, he said: "I hope that during the ten years I was connected with this city I gave satisfaction"—(here the company broke into a loud cheer.) "I was about to add," continued Lockwood, gravely, "I gave satisfaction to those gentlemen who came before me in my judicial capacity. I did not realize till I heard the applause that there were so many present here to-night."

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By G. H. Page.

THE Cosy Corner Tea-Rooms were to be opened in Bond Street on the 24th June, two days before the coronation of the King. Eva and Muriel Stanley, who had put all their little capital and their great hopes into the venture, were filled with tremors as the day drew near. Suppose the rooms were not a success after all?

And yet the girls had done everything they knew to command success. They had taken, at an immense rent, three large and pretty rooms at the corner of Maddox Street, and Eva, who was artistic, had superintended the decoration and furnishing. She had hung the walls with a green trellis-work paper put on in panels on a white background, and having found in the pattern-book of Messrs. Spoylet and Sneerum an ivy-leaf frieze, she had had the original idea of cutting the garland out and applying it as a border round the panelling. The result was entirely happy. Then she had laid down a dark green velvet carpet with just a little sprig of lighter green thrown on it here and there, and the curtains were of pale green cashmere edged with broad bands of chintz over which roses of every shade of deep crimson and blushing pink bloomed almost as naturally as in an English garden. They only wanted fragrance to complete the illusion, and, after all, the fragrance was supplied by the bouquets of real roses which on the morning of the 24th stood on every one of the thirty little tables, ten in each room.

The roses had all been sent up from Crossways, the girls' home in Sussex, where Mumsie and the kiddies had rifled the garden of every single blossom in order to help in the success of the C.C.T.

For these tea-rooms were naturally a very great venture, and a great deal depended for the Stanley girls on their success. Each had put her whole fortune of a thousand pounds into the scheme, and while gentle Mrs. Stanley approved of it, as she would have approved of anything which her energetic

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Eva and Muriel devised, while the kiddies were perfectly sure it was the most splendid idea in the world, all the family aunts had thrown up hands and eyes in horror, all the family uncles had loudly disapproved, all the cousins had deplored, criticised, and ridiculed, and most other people had cheerfully predicted failure.

"Such a stoopid thing to do," Aunt Jane Fisher had told them. "You are sure to lose your money, and there you'll be penniless on my hands, I suppose. But I warn you beforehand, I shall do nothing for you whatever. I've too many claims on my purse as it is."

Mrs. Fisher lived in Chester Square, had three thousand a year, and, as she said, many claims, which took the shape of two fat carriage horses, a fat coachman, a fat poodle, and a still fatter pug.

"Never heard of such a preposterous idea in my life!" fumed Uncle Bentley. "Louisa must be out of her mind to let the girls do such a thing. They might as well chuck their money into the Thames; while if they would invest it in Consols they would get close on forty pounds a year apiece, and what more can a single woman need?"

An old bachelor like Colonel Bentley, of course, needed a great deal more, since he lived at Walsingham House, paid the subscription of three clubs, and smoked more than twenty shillings' worth of cigars in the course of a week.

"So low! Why, it's keeping a shop!" cried one of the Eltham girls; their father was a dean, but their mother was Mrs. Stanley's sister.

"Well, when Tom hears of this he will have nothing to do with Eva, I am sure," declared the other.

Tom Eltham was still with the Yeomanry in South Africa, but before he went out he had spent a great deal more time than his sisters approved of down in Sussex with the Stanleys.

Willie Rhodes, the Harrow boy, however, was understood to have said he was jolly glad those plucky little Stanley girls were opening a grub-shop, and of course he would patronize them, and take the other chaps there, and no doubt, as he was their cousin, they would give him a long tick.

His was the only approval they received, and it did really require a great deal of courage to persevere under the dribbling of so much cold water, and to believe in their ultimate success.

But they were really plucky little girls, as Rhodes major said, and very devoted to each other, so that when Eva's high spirits momentarily failed her, Muriel would turn all her gaiety to the task of reviving them again, and *vice versâ*.

"Do you think that we have enough of everything?" said Muriel, the night before opening day. "It would be simply awful if we ran short."

Eva counted over the fowls, the tongues, the hams ready cooked, the loaves of bread, the pounds of butter, the dozens of lettuces, the cucumbers, the cream cheeses, the jars of jam, the cakes, and the biscuits with which they had stored their larder against the great event.

"Let me see," she said, "how many may we expect for luncheon? Town is very full; there are thousands and thousands of foreigners, and Americans, and Colonials over, who all must be fed. Still, we'll be modest, and not count on too many. Suppose we say twenty for luncheon?"

"Yes, twenty for luncheon at five shillings each. That makes five pounds, doesn't it?" murmured Muriel, working out the intricate sum with pencil and paper. "Now for tea we might reckon on a good many more. Lots of people who don't have luncheon can't do without tea. Let's say sixty teas at half a crown, which makes—makes—oh, what on earth *does* it make, Evy?"

It was delightful to find that it actually made twelve pounds ten, and then, reckoning on twenty people again for dinner, the girls found the takings of the day total twenty-seven pounds.

June the 25th would certainly bring more customers still. They thought they might reckon the takings of that day at about thirty pounds. And if Coronation Day itself did not augment the numbers, it was at least reasonable to suppose these would not decline. So they put down the rest of the week at the low figure of twenty pounds a day. Say, just for the sake of round numbers, one hundred and forty pounds for the five days from Tuesday till Saturday inclusive. And after that an average of fifty pounds a week for the rest of the year. Very good interest surely on two thousand pounds! Eva and Muriel were so enchanted with their arithmetic that they waltzed round the empty rooms and kissed each other ecstatically.

When the great morning arrived, the morning of the 24th, they dressed themselves in the dainty pale grey frocks which had been made for them from Eva's designs, put on

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the snowy lace and muslin bibs and aprons and sleeves, which lent them so business-like an air, and superintended the final touches.

A whole array of cooks and waitresses in rather more serviceable aprons than the girls' took final orders, cut sandwiches under their directions, set each little tea-table with an



"THERE ISN'T GOING TO BE NO CORONATION AFTER ALL."

embroidered cloth, a Japanese tea-tray, blue and white china, and a glass bowl of roses, sweet and dewy as when they were plucked.

The tea ladies walked through the room hand in hand, their pretty, fair heads held high with delight at the beauty and appropriateness of their arrangements.

"Ten o'clock!" said Eva. "Well, I'm glad we are ready so early, but, of course, we can't expect anyone to come for hours and hours yet."

"Sightseeing is awfully tiring work," Muriel suggested. "I dare say some of the people who are going round the decorations will just drop in for a sandwich or something."

"What a heavenly morning! Aren't we lucky the weather has turned so fine? I do really feel we are going to make a big success!"

And while the words were on Eva's lip, cook came bustling into the room with a scared face.

"Lor', miss! what do you suppose the man as brought the salmon have just told us? Why, there isn't going to be no coronation after all. It's put off deficiently."

The girls laughed.

"Nonsense! What tales you get hold of, cook, you and the fish-man. Why should it be put off?"

"They do say the King, God bless him, is ill."

"Oh, people are always croaking evil! Don't pay any attention, cook, but just get on with your work."

At that moment a boy passed down the street selling second editions of the morning papers, and shouting, "Serious illness of the King! Coronation postponed!"

Eva and Muriel looked at each other in dismay.

"The poor King!" was Muriel's first exclamation. "Oh, how I hope it isn't really much!"

"The poor people!" sighed Eva. "Think how horribly disappointed they'll be!"

Then the same idea occurred to both girls.

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"And poor little us! Whatever shall we do?"

It was a tragic moment, a shattering blow. But Eva perceived Muriel's pretty mouth to be trembling towards tears, and this was a sign she must not give way herself.

"If the King only recovers, the rest won't matter much," said she. "Cook, run out, like a dear, and get us a paper. And after all, Birdie," this was her pet name for Muriel, "after all we need not despair. People will have to eat just the same. Town is just as full as it was five minutes ago. Everybody is not going to run away instantly, you may be sure. On the contrary, they will want to remain on the spot to get news of the King. You may be sure that everyone who is here already will stay for the week. And perhaps even on Coronation Day (poor Coronation Day!) we shall do better business than we expected. For instead of people being on the stands all the time, and having their luncheon there, they will be wandering about and very likely coming in here to us. So cheer up, darling, and help me move this table nearer the window. There! It looks prettier like that, doesn't it?"

It was dreadfully sad about the King, but, of course, as Eva said, people would want their luncheons just the same. So everything was prepared for the expected guests, and the sisters flitted about with an anxious eye upon the clock.

Ten-thirty struck; eleven; eleven-thirty; twelve.

The tea ladies' hearts began to beat, for now at any moment the first customer might arrive.

Half-past twelve; one o'clock; half-past one.

Not a single person had come into the Cosy Corner Tea-Rooms. The girls looked at each other in silent agitation. What could it mean? For Bond Street was full of people passing to and fro, and for over an hour a steady stream had been pouring in and out of the tea-rooms opposite.

2 P.M.—The door opened with a cling, and both girls moved forward to welcome the incoming guest. But it was only a telegraph boy, who handed Eva the orange envelope containing a message from home.

"So sad about the dear King," it ran, "but how are things going with you?—Mumsie."

"Any answer, miss?" queried the boy, and Eva, compressing her lips, took a pencil and wrote: "Awfully sad, but everything going splendidly here."

Muriel, looking over her shoulder, nodded approval. They *couldn't* let the poor little mother know how miserably disappointed, how humiliated they felt. Time enough when they had to write to her, and, besides, by tea-time the position would be quite changed. Oh, by tea-time they would have their hands full; of that there could be no doubt!

And piles of delicious sandwiches stood ready, platefuls of tempting cakes, dozens of pots of tea waiting only to be "wetted," as cook expressed it; and meanwhile the hands crept round the little Louis Seize clock on the mantelpiece from two to three, from three to four, from four to five, and the street was always filled with people, but, as Muriel said, it seemed as though some malignant fairy had touched the Cosy Corner Tea-Rooms and made them invisible, for not a soul so much as paused at the door.

It was inexplicable, it was heart-breaking, and two pale, tired, pretty girls crept about the rooms they had prepared with such gay anticipations, and made a poor pretence of keeping up each other's spirits, and feared to look into each other's eyes lest they should burst into tears.

When, breaking the silence, six strokes chimed out from the ormolu time-piece, Muriel gave way. She sat down by one of the unneeded tables, sank her little head on the snowy cloth, and wept into her hands.

Eva bent over her, caressing her hair.

"Dearest Birdie, don't cry!" she pleaded. "The day isn't ended yet. Some people might come still. And whatever would they think if they were to find the tea ladies in tears?"

"They'd think the tea must have been horribly nasty to have had such an effect!" said Muriel, suddenly smiling up, although her long eyelashes were all beaded with diamonds. "And, oh! Heavens! Here, actually, is a real customer at last!"

Breathlessly the girls sprang to attention as a young man entered the shop.

He was a very tall young man, with splendidly broad shoulders, and strong, nervous hands, and a very sun-burned face. He didn't look quite English, and yet assuredly he was not foreign, but he might have been Canadian or Colonial. He bowed deferentially, and holding his hat in his hands said, with a little smile which showed milk-white teeth:—

"I wonder whether it would be possible for me to have any tea?"

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"You can have all there is," murmured Muriel, ruefully.

"Which means, I fear, that there is very little? And I could drink up a pailful. Nor would it be the first time either. I have often drunk a pailful when sheep-shearing out at Worrabinda."

"There are three dozen pots of tea waiting to be made," said Muriel again, "and if you like you can have them all."

"Dear me, my luck has turned at last," said the young man, gaily, putting down his hat and stick and choosing his chair. "I have been into a dozen different tea-shops and simply couldn't get served, the crowd was so great, and I was almost afraid to come in here as it was past six, and I supposed the tea-hour would be over."

"Here it has never begun," announced Muriel, her mouth trembling again, and a dewdrop fell from her dark lashes on to her roseleaf cheek. "We have not had a single human being all day."

And then because she was so unhappy, and because the young man was so sympathetic, and because Eva had gone to get the tea, she found herself telling the whole story of their great venture, their high hopes, and their frightful disillusionment.

"Well, that's too bad!" declared the young man. "But just like Fortune. She plays us these tricks continually. Look at King Edward, for instance, and look at me. Here I am, home in England for the first time in my life, after a year's hard work with the Australians in South Africa. I find myself alone in London, among six million or so of people, without a soul to exchange a word with. I can tell you I have found it jolly dull all day, and what with this news about the King, and what with the prospect of having to go without my tea, I've wished myself back in Worrabinda more than once. But the thing is to buck up, and take the jade's blows smiling. She gives them to try our mettle, I think, for when she finds it fairly tough she always relents in our favour. Now, if I had crumpled up as I had half a mind to do, and gone back to my hotel, I should not now be enjoying such a delicious cup of tea in such charming company. For I'm sure you'll do me the kindness of taking tea with me? I'm feeling so awfully lonely away from all my people, and it would be such a tremendous pleasure to me to be allowed to chat a little with you ladies."

Eva and Muriel, who themselves were weak from worry and want of food, couldn't resist his friendly petition. And he was so boyish, so open-hearted, and so outspoken that they were soon getting on with him as though they had known him all their lives.

But Eva's more practical mind was busy with housekeeping; she was thinking of all the stacks of food ranged round the larder, and she gave a little sigh.

"I wonder whether anyone will come in to dinner?" she said.

But a great idea had occurred to the guest.

"I was just going to ask whether I might not dine here myself," he replied. "And I shall probably bring a friend with me, or several friends. Perhaps as many as fifty. Could you accommodate fifty?"

The tea ladies gasped a little, for had he not said that he knew no one in London? But it was not for them to accuse a customer, and their only customer, too, of inconsistency of statement. Besides, he had already seized his hat and stick, and, with a friendly bow, was gone.

"Good gracious!" cried Muriel, rippling over now with laughter. "What an extraordinary young man! Why, he hasn't even paid for his tea!"

"Do you think he is a little queer?" Eva wondered. "You see, he's so sunburnt that very likely he's had sunstroke too."

But neither Eva nor Muriel accused him for one instant of anything worse than forgetfulness or eccentricity. There are certain faces one can never doubt.

The tea ladies, however, would certainly have thought their only customer actually mad had they witnessed his next proceedings.

A fat poodle had escaped from his mistress's victoria as it stood drawn up by the kerbstone, and turned a deaf ear to her agonized pleadings and the blandishments of the footman seeking to cajole it back. It ran perversely between the feet of the pedestrians, calling forth opprobrious names upon its beribboned head.

The young man laid a firm hand on the scruff of its neck, and carried it yelping to its owner's knee.

The old lady received it with tears of gratitude, displacing a still fatter pug in favour of the prodigal.

"If I could but do something for you!" she said, wistfully, to the poodle's preserver.

"You can come and dine with me," he retorted, promptly. "I don't know whether you have ever had a son, madam, but you are very like my own mother, and she, at this

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moment, is fifteen thousand miles away, and I'm feeling lonesome."

He took out his card, wrote "The Cosy Corner Tea-Rooms, 8 p.m.," above his address, and put it into the old lady's hand. Before she had adjusted her glasses and read "Mr. James Bullen, Worrabinda, Australia," that eccentric individual was out of sight

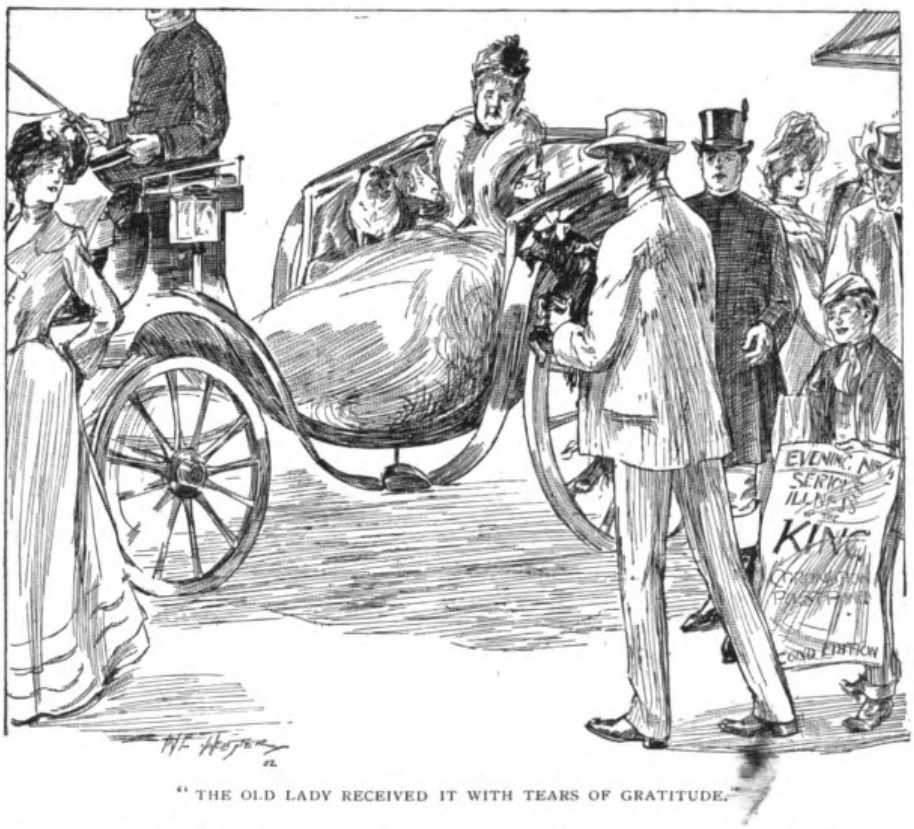
As he turned into Piccadilly someone clapped him on the shoulder.

"Halloa, Jimmy, my blooming millionaire!" cried a "gentleman in khaki." "Come to see the show, eh? But the show seems very much off."

"Good man, Eltham!" cried the Australian. "You're the very chap I want. Remember the last time we met in Pretoria, eh? Come and dine with me to-night at the Cosy Corner Tea-Rooms. Delightful place—awfully pretty girls——"

"Glad to hear the place is all right, but you needn't tell me the girls are pretty. They are the Stanleys, my cousins, and I was going there this very moment to see Eva—I mean to say to see them both. I'll dine with you with pleasure, but don't let me detain you now. I'll just run round and have a word with Eva—and, of course, with Muriel, at once."

By the time James Bullen had once traversed the space between the Circus and Green Park he had invited quite a number of people, choosing each of them for his or her respectable appearance as well as for a certain gleam of humanity in the eye. Amidst his invited guests was a bevy of charming girls under the escort of some attentive young men, a public school boy piloting two younger brothers, and an irascible old gentleman whom he had secured on the very steps of Walsingham House.



"THE OLD LADY RECEIVED IT WITH TEARS OF GRATITUDE."

"My dear sir," he had said in reply to the old gentleman's peppery refusals, "this is a unique occasion. Our King lies ill, we are all in consequence very much depressed, and it is our duty to keep up each other's spirits. I am an Australian alone in London, and I am not going to believe my father's people mean to give me the cold shoulder. If you were ever to come out to Worrabinda, you bet we'd put you up and do you well, and meantime you won't allow me to dine alone?"

But there seemed little chance of a solitary dinner for him. Between five minutes to eight and five minutes past the door of the Cosy Corner Tea-Rooms was perpetually on the click, and very nearly fifty people sat down to the inviting little tables.

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A carriage with two fat horses, two fat servants, a fat poodle, and a fatter pug stood outside the door, and an old lady had bustled in and kissed the tea ladies very affably.

"Your young friend, Mr. Bullen, is extremely eccentric," she began, when Tom Eltham put in a word. "Very rich, do you say? An Australian millionaire? To be sure, that makes a difference. The vagaries of millionaires must be pardoned like those of genius, I suppose. And I'm glad to see that you girls are doing such good business. I always told your poor mother that the best thing was for you to show a little energy and work for yourselves."

Aunt Jane's memory was, like her stature, short.

"What, no champagne?" stuttered Uncle Bentley, who had arrived at the tea-rooms actually holding his young host by the arm. "No champagne, Eva? Must have champagne on an occasion like this. Here, let Jane's servants take this card round to my man at Walsingham House. Let 'em bring back a couple of cases. Do 'em good to work 'em a bit."

The Eltham girls couldn't get over their astonishment and delight at meeting their brother Tom on his return from South Africa for the first time here; and the Harrow boy couldn't sufficiently express his admiration for his plucky little cousins' smart rooms, spiffin' tuck, and general jollity.

Tom Eltham had already managed to tell Eva what was his first and foremost object in coming home, and the young Australian lost no opportunity to make Muriel understand clearly that having once seen her he intended to see her very often again. She blushed and smiled with happiness, for somehow he seemed to her the most charming young man she had ever met.

If the luncheon and tea had been a failure at the C.C.T., at least the dinner was an enormous success. The family party was excessively gay, and the outside people were never for a moment allowed to feel themselves outsiders, owing to the tea ladies' attention and tact. And it was with feelings of the utmost cordiality and good-fellowship that all rose, on the invitation of Colonel Bentley, to drink the solemn and heartfelt toast, "God Save the King."



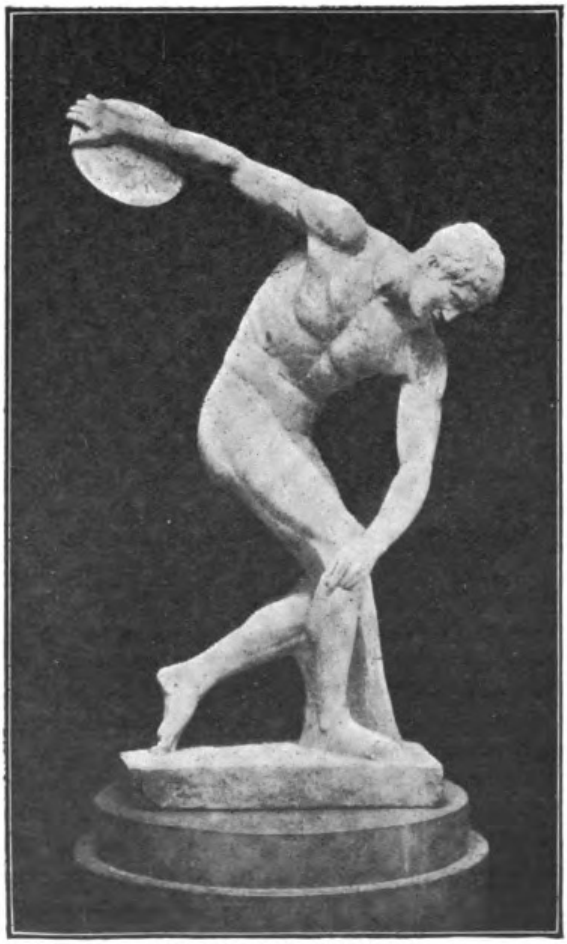
"UNCLE BENTLEY ARRIVED AT THE TEA-ROOMS ACTUALLY HOLDING HIS YOUNG HOST BY THE ARM."

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The Athlete in Bronze and Stone.

By C. B. Fry.

OF an athlete in action the statue, perhaps, most admired in both ancient and modern times is the Discobolus, or discus-thrower, of Myron. The original was in bronze, but we know only copies in marble. Myron's most successful human figures represented purely physical qualities; he did not express the feelings of the mind. He delighted to seize for representation "the moment when the whole breath was held back for a final effort of strength — that moment, in fact, when the human figure is most truly statuesque; when the body is lifeless, so to speak, like the statue itself, and the spectator suspends breathing in sympathy." Of another famous athletic statue of his, for instance, that representing the Spartan Ladas, who, in winning a long-distance race at Olympia, fell dead at the goal, we read that the figure seemed about to leap from its base to seize the victor's wreath, the last breath leaving his lips. An ancient art-critic described Myron as the first maker of statues "to multiply truth," and as being, compared with Polycletus, another famous sculptor of athletes, able to work more points into his figures and "more careful in symmetry." By multiplying truth was meant, it has been suggested, an exaggeration of Nature, in order to give effect to the momentary attitude of the figure; and by symmetry, "the manner in which every member and part of the body was made to work together for the expression of the moment of action." In the Discobolus Myron seems indeed to have been most successfully careful of symmetry in this sense, but not to have exaggerated truth so much as to have seized and portrayed all its points.



THE DISCOBOLUS OF MYRON.
From a Photo. by Mansell & Co.

It is a marvellous and a beautiful statue. The thrower is caught at the moment when the right arm, discus in hand and flat against the forearm, is at the extremity of its backward swing, and when also the right leg has been advanced, the foot turned outwards and firmly gripping the ground in anticipation of the forward swing; the left arm has swung loosely across to the right, the left leg is loose for the imminent forward lunge, dragging the toes; the whole body stoops for the effort, half-turned for the circular sweep.

The details of how the discus was thrown in the old Olympic games are not known. But in the Olympic games held at Athens in 1896 the method used is thus described by Mr. G. S. Robertson, the Oxford hammer-thrower, who competed unsuccessfully in "the disc," but won first prize with his Greek Pindaric ode: "The discus is a sort of girdle-cake of wood, about 8½in. in diameter, with a brass core, and weighs about 4½lb. The thrower stands in a square of two mètres (about 6½ft.) and holds the discus in both hands above the left shoulder. The fingers of the right hand grip it tightly by the upper edge; those of the

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left merely support it. The left leg is advanced. Then the body is swung half round to the right, so that the face is turned towards the discus, the latter having been brought round by the right hand to a position above and behind the thrower's head. At the same time the right leg is put forward. It is this attitude which is depicted in the celebrated statue. The left leg is then brought swiftly to the front again, and the discus is hurled with all the swing of the body." He also remarks that the Discobolus really represents a snap-shot of the middle of the action, a notable achievement.

It is most interesting to discover by trial that, in following the method described, one falls at the end of the backward swing into the precise attitude of the statue. One can then appreciate the fidelity of Myron's details: the outward turn of the right foot and the vigorous grip of the ground with the toes, the tension of the muscles of the right thigh and calf, and especially the drag of the left foot with the toes turned over, for in the circular sweep of the backward swing the toes are inevitably turned over. Note, too, that only at the extremity of the backward swing is the head as much bent forward as in the statue: a moment before and the head is more upright, a moment after and the face is lifted for the eye to follow the flight of the missile.

From an athletic point of view it is most interesting to perceive how perfectly the sculptor has caught the effort of throwing—an effort not of strained, contorted strength, but of smooth, quick, agile swing, an effort less of strength than of knack. In throwing the discus the power comes from the swing of the arm following the swift turn of the body on the hips, and the abetting lift from the thighs. In Myron's statue it is the muscles behind the shoulder which swing the right arm, the muscles of the small of the back and of the waist which turn the body, and the muscles of the thigh which give the upward lift, that stand out contracted.

One of the most perfect points about the statue is the slackness of the disengaged limbs. How loosely the left arm hangs! How loosely the left leg drags! And one is reminded how in driving at golf or at cricket the perfection of style is attained by him who keeps all his muscles that are not directly engaged loose and free: while he who contracts his whole muscular system indiscriminately is stiff and ungainly, and makes a far greater effort than is needed for the full effect of his stroke. In the statue, too, even the throwing arm itself is loose, as it should be: a mere rope of flesh and sinew connecting the missile with the propelling force resident in the trunk and thighs. That ropey pull of the right arm is perfection; so, too, is the mere suspicion of tightness—that and no more—in the face, the lips parted, the teeth not clenched.

It is a figure of lissom, sinewy strength—no corded, exaggerated muscles: beautifully developed all over; but the deltoid muscles on the points of the shoulders, the muscles above the shoulder-blade, and of the waist are fine to see. You will notice the same in a great fast bowler. The chest is broad and deep, the ribs roundly sprung. The thighs and lower legs are powerful and the knees and ankles, through strong, are shapely. Such a man should have been a shrewd combatant in the "pentathlon" at Olympia, the group of five events which comprised throwing the discus and the javelin, wrestling, leaping, and running, and gave scope at once for adroit activity and strength.

In contrast with Myron's Discobolus, the perfect type of the athlete in action, Walter Pater selects as the *beau ideal* of athletic repose the Diadumenus of Polycletus, the athlete at rest, binding round his brows the fillet or diadem of victory. Of this statue there are several extant copies, two of them in the British Museum, not generally regarded as adequately representative of the original bronze; the one from which the illustration is taken is styled a Græco-Roman copy.

Polycletus was a native of the Peloponnesus, and in a way its artistic champion in rivalry with the great Phidias of Athens. Like Phidias, Polycletus executed statues of deities, notably one of Hera, which, in comparison with the former's famous Zeus at Olympia, was said to have been superior in finish, though inferior in grandeur and imposing aspect. Another celebrated statue of Polycletus was his Wounded Amazon, "in exquisite pain alike of body and soul"; in contrast therefore with Myron he did express the feelings of the mind. But he delighted most in rendering the form of the ideal athlete, of which type, besides the Diadumenus, one called the Doryphorus, or spear-bearer, is celebrated. In comparing Myron and Polycletus, Pater says that "Myron by patience of genius had mastered the secret of the expression of movement, had plucked out the heart of its mystery. Polycletus, on the other hand, is, above all, the master of rest,

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of the expression of rest after toil. . . . He studied human form under such conditions as would bring out its natural features, its static laws in their entirety, their harmony; and in an academic work, so to speak, no longer to be clearly identified in what may be derivations from it, he claimed to have fixed the canon, the common measure of perfect man."

The Athlete with the Diadem strikes the eye of the observer less perhaps as an athlete than as a beautiful youth necessarily represented in terms of athletic beauty. One is inclined rather to admire in him the beauty of a human form truly divine, with perhaps a sidelong remembrance of the Apollo Belvidere, than to inquire what feats of physical prowess he might be fitted for or have done. It is as though Polycletus idealized humanity in the shape of a youthful athlete where Myron caught the athlete as such and made him a perfect man.



THE DIADUMENUS OF POLYCLETUS.
From a Photo. by Mansell & Co.

The figure is standing charmingly at ease with a slight inclination of the body at the waist, as though accepting all the repose there may be in such an attitude. Indeed, this restfulness is one of the most affecting qualities of the statue; the maker seems to have put all the relaxation of a figure reclining into this figure standing. The languor of the turn of the right arm and hand raised to bind the fillet is most expressive; it is as though the binding of the fillet were too much trouble. The action, or, rather, the suggestion of action, is one of tired pleasure: rather as though the youth was lifting a cup to his lips, knowing he will enjoy the liquid, yet not eager to drink, and thinking of something else. And about the inclination of the head and the rather thoughtful face there is an expression of detachment, as though he were not explicitly, but at the back of his mind, wondering whether the crown of victory were worth the dust of conflict.

It is a beautiful figure, but of graceful, dignified strength rather than of swift activity. One cannot quite imagine the Discobolus of Myron looking like this even in repose or tired after the games; he would even then suggest more strongly the capacity for alert action. The Diadumenus, so shapely with his long limbs and long, slow, smooth curves, calls no attention to his muscular development: his muscles are relaxed and merged in his shapeliness: one alone catches the eye, the oblique fold of muscle leading to the groin, always noticeable when well developed. There is just the suggestion about him of the athlete beautifully developed but not fully trained. His chest and shoulders are grand, but he scarcely tapers towards the waist and flanks with that slight tapering you notice in the trained man, the hard, sinewy Discobolus. His thighs and legs are the least bit lazy and lacking in vigour. Are the thighs full enough for the trunk above, full enough sideways? Nor has he that smallness, almost delicacy of knee and ankle, the not disproportionate slimness of knee and ankle that marks speed and activity. He would walk beautifully, but would he run swiftly or leap far? In hurling the discus or the javelin and in wrestling he might be a match for the Discobolus, but not, surely, in running or leaping. He has the broad hips of the swift runner, but not the nicety of joint—at least, not in the copy we have here.

A statue of some affinity from the athletic point of view with the Diadumenus of Polycletus is the Adorante, or Praying Youth, of Berlin, which has become famous, apart from its own intrinsic beauty, by reason of the high esteem in which it was held by the great art-critic, the discoverer, or at any

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rate the revealer, of Greek art, Winckelmann. The Adorante is not directly connected with any idea of athleticism, except in so far as the beauty of virile youth must be in some degree athletic.

Winckelmann admired this statue for its beauty, for its realization of what he considered to be the true end of art. According to him, the artist, the sculptor, could only attain this end by subordinating all individual and characteristic features to his general scheme. "The true artist, selecting from Nature the phenomena fitted for his purpose, and combining them through his imagination, creates an ideal type marked in action by 'noble simplicity and calm greatness,' an ideal type in which normal proportions are maintained, particular parts, such as muscles and veins, not being permitted to break the harmony of the general outlines."



THE ADORANTE, OR PRAYING YOUTH.
From a Photo. by Levy & Sons.

Selective observation and constructive imagination could, of course, evolve according to these principles a type of the athlete in action. But the very presence of action, at any rate of athletic action as portrayed, for instance, in the Discobolus of Myron, necessitates a certain emphasis on the muscles and limbs directly engaged. Hence it would seem that the beauty to be abstracted from athletic figures would most naturally, according to Winckelmann's theory, find its expression in the smoothness and harmony of such figures as the Diadumenus and the Adorante.

Yet in the Adorante there is no missing the athleticism under its cloak of beauty. The figure is of a youth, almost a boy, younger at any rate than the Athlete with the Diadem: he stands with his weight firm on his left foot, with his right knee slightly bent, and his right heel raised a few inches from the ground. His face is inclined upwards and both hands are raised above his head, the palms spread open in supplication. Is he praying to Olympic Zeus for favour in the foot-race? The gracefulness of the figure hides for a moment and then reveals the shapely power of the shoulders and hips: the round, smooth moulding of the trunk and limbs lightens a certain solidity of strength; not an ounce of retarding weight, yet no trace of frailty.

To gnarled muscularity there could be no greater contrast: the muscles are on him, but their surfaces flow into one another so that the total effect is smooth and harmonious. The legs carry the body finely; long, free-moving legs they might be. But, as in the Athlete with the Diadem, the knees and ankles seem just to miss the fineness of moulding that indicates extreme nimbleness and speed. With such perfect proportions the youth must have been a runner of grace and power; but he might just have missed superlative excellence of speed. And had he been a hurdler he might have been just a trifle heavy of foot in alighting after clearing the obstacles in his stride. But in the feats of mingled activity and strength, wrestling and boxing and the like, he would, after training, have been a prince among his peers of age and ambition.

The Discobolus at Rest of the Vatican is not so well known as Myron's masterpiece of athletic action, but it is, as representing the figure of an athlete, equally fine, if not finer. It is supposed to be a copy of an original by Alcamenes, a pupil of Phidias, who was particularly famous for the gracefulness and perfect proportion of his female forms; indeed, he was the maker of a celebrated statue of Aphrodite, of which the Venus of Milo, in the Louvre, is by some regarded as a copy. But there is nothing feminine about the Discobolus at Rest—a man if ever there was one.

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Strictly speaking, the athlete is only at rest in the sense that he is not engaged in throwing the missile; he appears to be moving into position for the throw, planting his right foot carefully as though on a mark, and looking down slightly as though to make sure. The attitude of the figure reproduces almost exactly that of a runner carefully adjusting his toe on the mark before the start of a race. He has his right hand raised, and a careful fore-finger, somewhat in front of him exactly as one sees in a runner who is taking pains in setting his foot to the mark.

It has been suggested that the watchfulness and attention expressed by the raised hand are directed to the throw of another; but the athlete seems rather to be looking down at his own foot and entirely engaged with himself. A notable detail of the figure is the hang of the left arm, the hand of which carries the discus; you can feel the weight of the discus in the hang of that arm; there is just a trace of contraction of the biceps as though the muscle anticipated the lifting of the weight presently.

The muscular development is that of a fully-trained athlete in his athletic prime. Compared with Myron's Discobolus he is more muscular, but less lithe and sinewy. Indeed, the marking of the muscles would be almost exaggerated were it not for the perfection of the muscular proportion of the figure; and it may be said of the whole body as of the left arm that there is a suggestion of action, of muscular effort, almost eagerly anticipated; and with this anticipation a kind of contraction *par avance* of the muscles is conformable. The limbs are long and active; but there is about the figure a certain squareness, though this without angularity.

The almost assertive power of the upper part of the body makes the thighs—though, no doubt, they are in proportion—look a trifle as if they were not quite up to the weight. The knees and ankles are strong rather than nice—a point mentioned previously. There is no suspicion of languor of movement, as with the Athlete with the Diadem, but the quickness is of alert, ready strength rather than of smooth, graceful agility.

The man is, for certain, not essentially a runner or leaper; he is a strong—very strong—man, with all the sheer strength that is possible without verging into the Hercules type of strength, terrible, but slow: he stands midway between the almost feminine grace of the Adorante and the muscle-plated, overgrown strength of the Farnese Hercules. As such he is a golden mean and very beautiful. With the Adorante and the Athlete with the Strigil he shares the perfect athlete's head—the round head, rather small, covered with crisp, close curls and set on a splendid neck, the head that is truly a crown for the body that bears it.



THE DISCOBOLUS AT REST.
From a Photo. by D. Anderson.

Of all the ancient statues, the best from a purely athletic as against a purely artistic standpoint is that known as the Apoxyomenus, or Athlete with a Strigil (*i.e.*, a flesh-scraper). Here we have the perfect prize-man for the "pentathlon," who might win all the five events, for he would be as first-rate a runner—at any rate of short distances—as he would be first-rate at wrestling and the discus.

The original statue of Lysippus was in bronze; there is a marble copy in the Vatican. Pliny narrates that the statue was brought from Greece by Agrippa to adorn the baths he built for the people, and that the Emperor Tiberius so admired it that he carried it off to his palace, but was forced to restore it by the outcries of the populace the next time he appeared in public.

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The reason this athlete strikes a modern eye as so perfect a type is that we find in him what we do not see even in the Discobolus of Myron, the thoroughbred knees and ankles of the born runner. With all his splendid strength, the Apoxyomenus is perfectly made for speed over short distances; he would be too heavy for long distances; but nowhere among the most famous masterpieces do we see the long-distance runner specialized as we know him.

It is interesting to learn that Lysippus was one of the first sculptors who attempted to modify the canon of athletic proportions worked out by Polycletus. In seeking this modification he is said to have introduced a smaller head and a slimness of the arms and legs which gave a greater lightness to the figure. But the slimness of limb, or, rather, the appearance of lightness of limb, was gained chiefly by making the joints, especially the knees and ankles, more delicate. And it is precisely this modification that renders the Apoxyomenus so pleasing to us as an athletic type. He is obviously a runner, whatever else he may be, and most of us know the runner when we see him, few the wrestler or the discus-thrower; and it is the runner's points we miss in the Discobolus at Rest, for instance, and in the Athlete with the Diadem.



THE ATHLETE WITH A STRIGIL.
From a Photo. by Sommer.

It is said of Lysippus that, though he studied the works of Polycletus, he found himself compelled to abandon "the dignity and repose by which the older masters suggested the possession of physical power in favour of new attitudes in which the exercise of physical power should be made apparent by its effects on the body and on the face." For this reason he was fond of studies of Hercules, who could always be represented under the effects of his huge labours. Yet his type of athlete, curiously enough, was farther than those of Polycletus and Myron from the "mere strong man."

The Apoxyomenus represents an athlete scraping the oil from his extended right arm. The trainer of ancient Greece was a believer in anointing the athlete with oil as a means to suppleness; in fact, he was called the "aleiptes," or anointer. The statue expresses most beautifully the happy vigour, the delicious semi-languor of an athlete in perfect condition, not tired but fresh after exacting exercise. The small round head, with its close curls and beautiful round face, is slightly withdrawn from the outstretched arm in a most attractive poise. And the whole figure is redolent of the "contagious pleasantness" so characteristic of the Greek athletic youth in bronze and stone.

The athletic points of the figure are the thick, round chest, not too broad, the hips broad and powerful but not heavy, the tapering of the trunk to the waist, the fine outward sweep of the thighs and lower legs, and the straight line inside the leg from thigh to ankle. No doubt the tapering of the trunk was another attempt at lightness, but it is very true to athletic perfection as we see it. Minor but telling points are the small, quick wrists and the manly, capable hands; the thin, shapely, yet capable feet, with the arched instep, betokening springiness and lightness of tread. It is a pity Lysippus has not given us, or we have not inherited from him, such another athlete represented in motion, starting for a race or in the act of running, to be a companion statue for Myron's Discobolus.

The artist who made the swift strength of the Athlete with the Strigil is supposed also to have evolved that type of colossal, heavy strength of which the most notable example is the Farnese Hercules of Glycon in the Museum at Naples. This Herculean type is not athletic according to the Greek ideal of beauty and strength combined. A man built on such lines would hardly have been suited even to the competition at the Olympic

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games called the "pancratium," a combination of boxing and wrestling. Victory in this contest was reserved for men of the greatest strength, but the skill and adroitness required in boxing and wrestling would put out of court mere unwieldy muscle.

The boxing, at any rate, was scientific and skilful; the boxers were not allowed to bind their hands with leathern straps, much less to wear the cruel cestus, a binding of iron-studded straps, of Roman times. Armed with a Roman cestus, the Farnese Hercules, reduced to mortal dimensions, would have been a terrible adversary if allowed to plant one blow home; but in skilful boxing such muscular development as his would be far too slow.



THE FARNESE HERCULES.
From a Photo. by Sommer.

As an athlete he might have been a champion lifter of heavy weights, but not much else. In a boat, with all his strength he would scarcely have pulled his own weight. He is, of course, a representation of the colossal strength, slow and persistent, that accomplished the colossal labours of the legends. He is a deity-hero, not beautiful but imposing. In his right hand he holds the golden apples of the Hesperides, indicating the accomplishment of the eleventh of the labours imposed on him by King Eurystheus, and leans weary upon his club. The whole figure seems to represent, in some degree, the exhaustion of great muscular strength.

But the effort of the artist to express muscular strength is overstrained; those huge, bulging muscles seem almost as though they had been riveted on to the frame in gnarled lumps. The suggestion of heavy contraction of the muscles in an attitude of weariness and repose is incongruous, though this would not seem a defect were Hercules lifting his club for a gigantic blow, or even intending to do so.

Huge as are the thighs and calves of the figure, they are scarcely powerful enough for the huge trunk they support. The hips seem not broad enough in comparison with the chest. And the trunk strikes one as not only too heavy, but too long for the legs. It is a grand and imposing statue, but as a type of the sheer "strong man" it cannot be compared with the bronze athlete found in the Tiber, and now in one of the museums in Rome.

More in keeping with the ideal of strength required in the "pancratium" are the two figures of the famous Wrestlers in the Uffizi Gallery in Florence. But struggling on the ground, as shown in this group, was not allowed in the Olympic games. Wrestling both among the Greeks and the Romans was held in much higher estimation than it is by us; indeed, with them it seems to have been the favourite athletic exercise.

The methods of the Greek and Roman wrestlers appear not to have differed much, but the Romans characteristically, as also in boxing, allowed all sorts of cruel practices which were not tolerated in Greece—at least, in the great games. If a combatant in the "pancratium" killed his adversary he was not only disqualified, but severely punished. The Roman wrestler in the public games was honoured all the more if he succeeded in maiming or killing his adversary. One esteemed trick was to seize your opponent's fingers and bend them back till broken; another, to choke him by encircling his neck with your arm from behind, or else by pressing up his chin with your elbow; in fact, the greatest brutality was the highest art. But wrestling was also practised in Rome, as in Greece, as a pastime.

The popularity of the exercise may be judged from the name "palæstra," or wrestling-ground, given to the open-air gymnasium,

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From a] THE WRESTLERS IN THE UFFIZI GALLERY. *[Photo.*

The body of the wrestler was anointed with oil, and then sprinkled with sand or dust to give a grip.

The Wrestlers of the Uffizi Gallery are not regarded as quite satisfactory because the heads do not belong to the original and the greater part of the legs and arms is modern: the right arm of the man who seems to be victorious is supposed to be erroneously restored. But both figures are fine specimens of the heavy-weight athlete who is not ponderous. The build and the limbs are massive, but well within the limits of activity. The victor displays a splendid breadth of back, with its large folds of muscle on each side of the spine, making a rivulet in between: muscles not knotty or angular, but sweeping and round. He is admirably shaped, too, in the small of the back and the flanks, and has a magnificent thigh. The interlocking of the thighs and ankles catches the eye at once.

The man underneath is turning a wary head, and, while straining tensely up from the ground against the downward pressure of his opponent, present or expected, is alert in every muscle to reverse the position. The wary strain of both men is finely suggested: one is forcing, the other resisting, yet with that reserve of force or resistance which the wrestler must warily maintain lest his own effort carry too far and be turned against him by his adversary.

Two statues which have no direct connection with purely athletic ideals, and less with one another, but which are not without athletic interest, are the immortal Apollo Belvidere and the Dying Gaul.

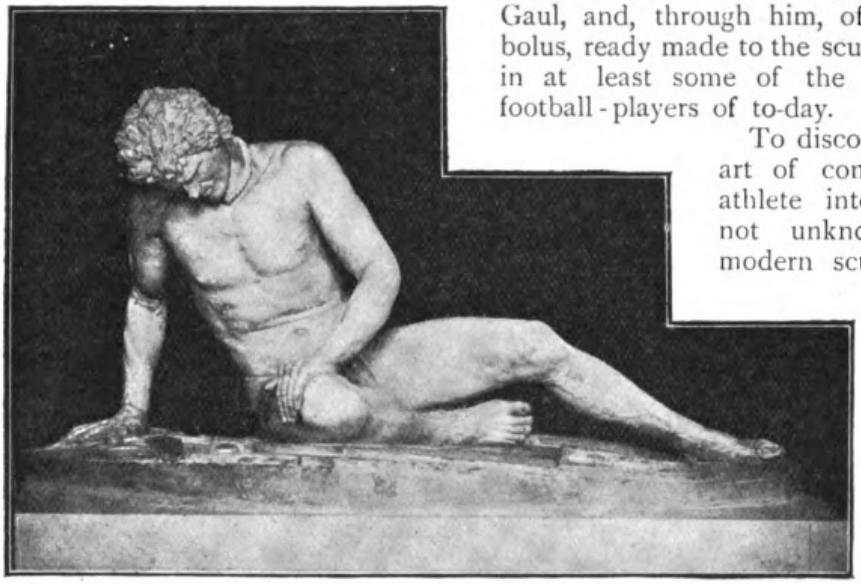
The Apollo is famous for the disdainful beauty of his head and face, the divine dignity of his attitude, and the exquisite perfection of his proportions. It has been said that in him the perfect beauty of man and of woman are blended and spiritualized to make the god. But from the antique statues he has been selected by one of the best-known judges of rowing, in special contrast to the "strong man" of exaggerated muscle, as a perfect type of what the heavy-weight oarsman should be. He is the sun-god terrifying with his ægis the enemies of his client city; but his great shapely shoulders, back, and hips, and the sweep and freedom of his limbs, are of the athlete.



THE APOLLO BELVIDERE.
From a Photo. by D. Anderson.

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The Dying Gaul as a work of art is celebrated as an expression of the pathos of manly death, and the meaning of the marble has been immortalized by Byron. But whether a warrior or a gladiator, he is distinctly an athlete, and most interesting, because he represents the athlete of Northern Europe as distinguished from, or identified with, the athlete of Greece and Olympia. If not a Gallic warrior but a gladiator, he might be a Dacian or a German, and he might in truth be an Englishman. Yet, set the round Greek head upon his shoulders and he differs scarcely at all from the Greek prizeman, the Discobolus of Myron. He is less rounded-off, a trifle angular, perhaps, in comparison with the Greek type, but he has the same freedom and length of limb, the same union of strength and activity.



From a Photo. by] THE DYING GAUL. *[Sommer.*

Suppose him an Anglo-Saxon, and might he not be an elder brother of the youthful English athlete of whom Walter Pater has written that "in England also, in Oxford, we have still, for any master of such art (the art of the Greek sculptor of athletes) that may be given to us, subjects truly 'made to his hand'"? You may see, too, if your eye can penetrate and abolish the unsightly shirt and knickers, the hideous shin-guard and boot, all that is athletic of the Gaul, and, through him, of the Discobolus, ready made to the sculptor's hand, in at least some of the professional football-players of to-day.

To discover that the art of congealing the athlete into bronze is not unknown among modern sculptors, one need only visit the Tate Gallery in London and look at the two beautiful statues by Lord Leighton, "The Athlete Struggling with a Python" and "The Sluggard."

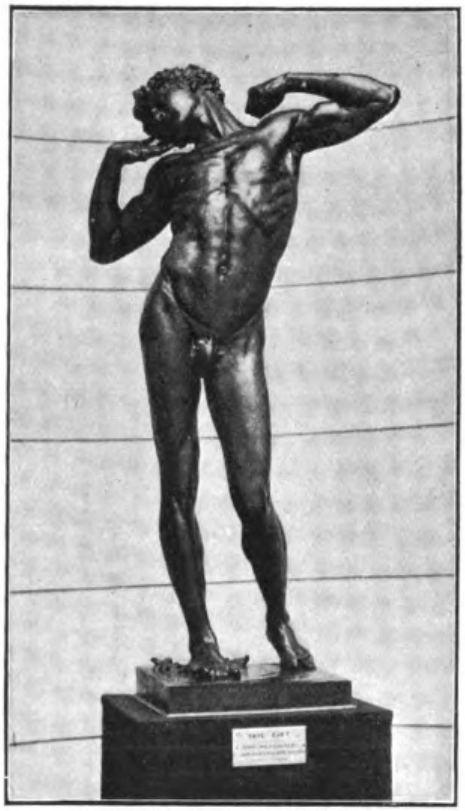
It is difficult for the lay or, shall we say, the athletic eye to detect wherein the former statue is inferior to anything among the antiques. It represents an athlete struggling in the folds of a huge snake, yet not so huge as to destroy our hope that the man may win. With his right hand driven at arm's length he grips the serpent's neck and holds off the gaping fangs. The tail of the beast is hooked round his right ankle, and its length passing between his legs coils over his left thigh and then round the small of his back, and then clings up his right side to the angle of the arm-pit and along the extended right arm. With his left arm behind his back he is trying to release his body from the coil.



ATHLETE STRUGGLING WITH A PYTHON.—BY LEIGHTON.
From a Photo. by Ellis & Hayward.

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The figure of the athlete is magnificent, the perfection of agile strength, deep-chested, lissom, and muscular, with most adequate thighs and legs. Every muscle and every proper vein and sinew stands out to the eye, not exaggerated, but perfectly expressive of the tension of the struggle. The composition of the statue strikes one as most artistic in this, that the strain against the circling coils is in all directions: the powerful legs are set firmly wide apart, the arms press opposite ways, and the whole body strains, it seems, all ways at once.



THE SLUGGARD.—BY LEIGHTON.
From a Photo. by Ellis & Hayward.

Such a centrifugal struggle, so to speak, justifies the contraction and stress of every fibre of the body. And the anatomy of the figure is said to be remarkable in truth. In physical beauty the athlete might be compared to the Adorante, trained and more muscular and with more capable legs.

"The Sluggard" is beautiful as such, expressive of a youth sleepily stretching himself with head inclined over one arm doubled up towards it with open hand, while the other arm is doubled higher over the other shoulder with clenched fist. The mingled tension and relaxation of the "stretch" is admirable. But in the sluggard wakened against his will there is the athlete, and the athlete of a type interesting particularly because not found in the more famous antiques; the deep chest, spare frame, and light limbs, though the legs are, perhaps, not too light, are those of the long-distance runner.

Here we have the youth who might have won the long race at Olympia, about three miles. Over such a distance the Athlete with the Strigil, one conjectures, would not have lived with him, for the former is built for pace, the latter for stamina, as these terms are applied in running. The Sluggard would move with the long stride, easy and unhurried, and the lift from the back of the thighs; the other with the gripping front foot, the pull from the front leg, as well as with the quick push from the rear foot, of the sprinter.

Among the antiques, perhaps the statues most in harmony with the type to which one refers the athleticism of long-distance running are the much-admired bronzes of Naples, the Mercury in Repose and the two so-called Discoboli.

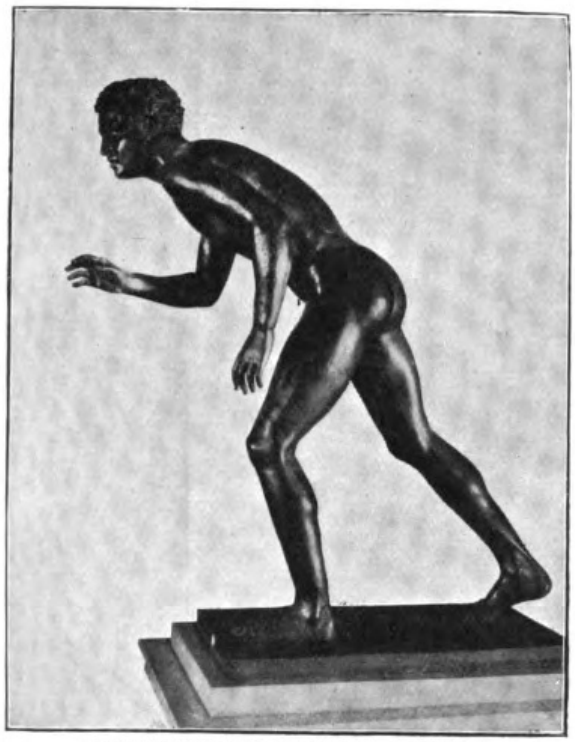
Mercury is, of course, a god, and the messenger of the gods, with his winged sandals bound to his ankles. But he has the wayfaring foot and the sturdy lightness of build of the distance-runner. Perhaps he is just too sturdy for the long-distance type, and might be a better competitor in the "diaulus" at Olympia, about a quarter-mile; still, he would not be a sprinting quarter-miler, but the runner of any distance from that to a full mile. He has the hips and back almost of the sprinter, but the legs are the striding legs of the miler.



MERCURY IN REPOSE.
From a Photo. by Sommer.

The bronze Discoboli, so-called, of Naples

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ONE OF THE BRONZE DISCOBOLI OF NAPLES.
From a Photo. by Sommer.

have been variously interpreted. They may be discus-throwers watching intently the flight of the missile now well on its way, having followed on to the left foot advanced again after the stride of the right foot, with which, it seems, the discus was thrown. Or they may be wrestlers about to engage, which would account equally well for the intent, watchful look on the faces, the attitude of the bodies, and the position of arms and hands, and better for the fact that there are two of them, both in the same attitude. They are not on the mark ready to start for a race, because the arms are incorrectly held for this; in starting the natural position is for the arm on the side of the advanced foot to be advanced with it, while the other is withdrawn behind the body. But they remind one closely of high-jumpers with eyes fixed on the bar and stooping to gather momentum for the run up to it: the hands and arms are right for this. The figures are probably, however, of wrestlers about to engage.

But with their long, clean limbs and light, strong build they make excellent types of the long-distance runner. They have the proper leg and back. No doubt the lightness of the figures and their slimness of limb are meant to express youth. But imagine them a little older, with the same bodies, and they are three-milers to the life, or rather better than life.

Younger than these is the Spinario, the boy drawing a thorn from his foot, a figure famous not only for its artistic beauty, but for its preservation in the real antique bronze. He, too, has been variously explained. In the Capitoline Museum he is called the Shepherd Martius, and one story made for him is that he was a shepherd boy who, having been sent to reconnoitre an enemy, returned from his errand without stopping to extract a thorn which had wounded his foot. Others have seen in him a boy-athlete who has finished the course before extracting the thorn; or one who stopped in the middle of the race for this purpose.

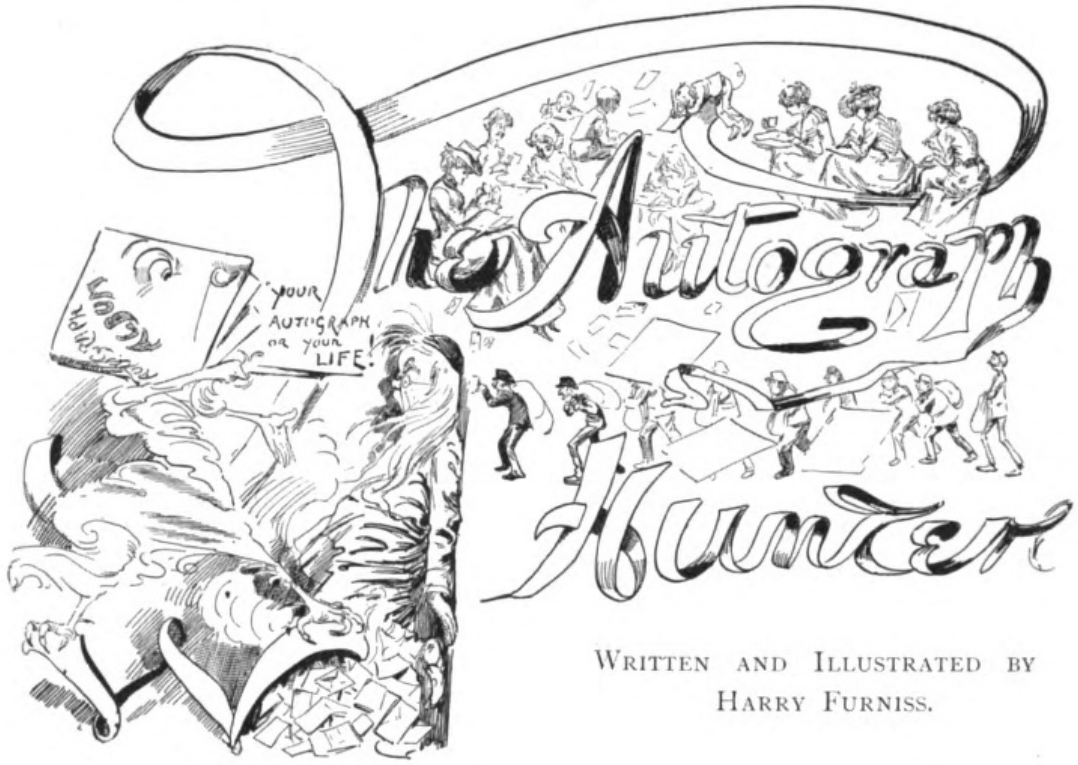
It has been remarked that there is nothing athletic about him and that the subject is pastoral and arcadian. But at his boyish years he might be an athlete without showing it; he would be just a boy, not a miniature to scale of the muscled Apoxyomenus. Pater sets him beside "the larger, the full-grown, physical perfection of the Discobolus, one of whose alert younger brethren he may be."

He may well have been a competitor in the races for boys at the games, and might have won, for his shapely, half-grown limbs and smooth, spare frame are those of the true boy-athlete. At any rate, he is extracting the thorn very carefully, with lips pursed for the delicate work like one threading a needle with a tiny eye.



THE SPINARIO.
From a Photo. by D. Anderson.

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WRITTEN AND ILLUSTRATED BY HARRY FURNISS.

IS there any inoculation possible to avert autograph fever? It is a disease always prevalent in the United States, but of late years has become quite an epidemic in England. Tattooing the patient's own autograph on the arm suggests itself to a Pasteur of graphology. The worst of this disease is that it is not painful to those attacked by it, but punishes those they correspond with. In the case of those who worry artists for sketches as well as autographs, a picture might be pin-pricked on the arm as well, to cure them of pin-pricking their fellow-creatures. It is flattering to me that I am being constantly hunted by the autograph fiend. And in return for the compliment I do not hesitate to send an autograph when the hunter accompanies the dart by a stamped and directed envelope. Others I quickly dispatch to the W.P.B. One of the latter just to hand I have saved from destruction to keep as a curiosity—after fumigation—for its contents are startling :—

"Sick Room, Monkton School.

"DEAR SIR,—A squad of us are down with German measles, and we are trying to run a 'Monkton Measles Chronicle' to cheer us up a bit. Can you very kindly send us something for this week's number? We are trying to make it funny, and a little sketch from you would be awfully jolly.

"Yours truly,

"THE OCCUPANTS OF THE SICK ROOM.

"Please send answer to the Editor, 'Monkton Measles Chronicle,' etc."

The funniest description of an autograph was given at my own house. My daughter was entertaining some little girls at tea when I overheard the following conversation between two of her small guests :—

Winnie (aged eleven): "Do you collect autographs?"

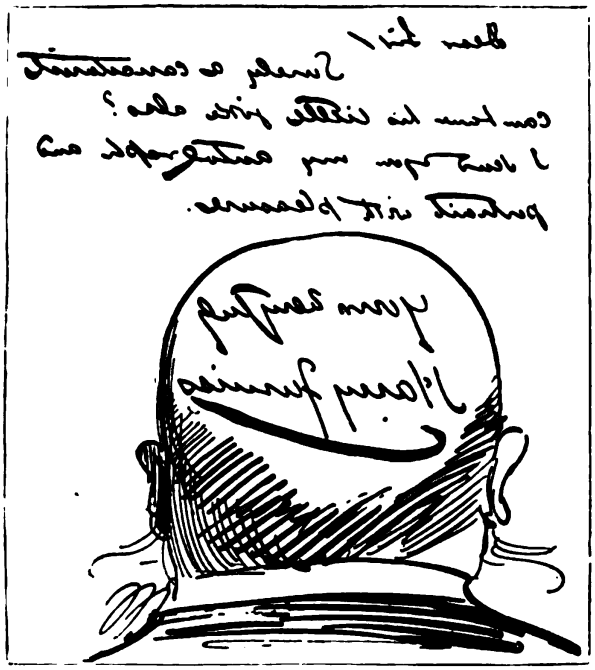
Girlie (aged nine): "No, I would not collect them on any account; they are nasty, horrid things."

Winnie: "I don't think you know what an autograph is."

Girlie: "Oh, yes, I do. It's a nasty, green, slimy thing that grows in water."

Well, it is quite as difficult to get "a green, slimy" actinia off a rock under water as it is to get an autograph off some celebrities. Those whom the autograph hunter chases are generally very busy people indeed.

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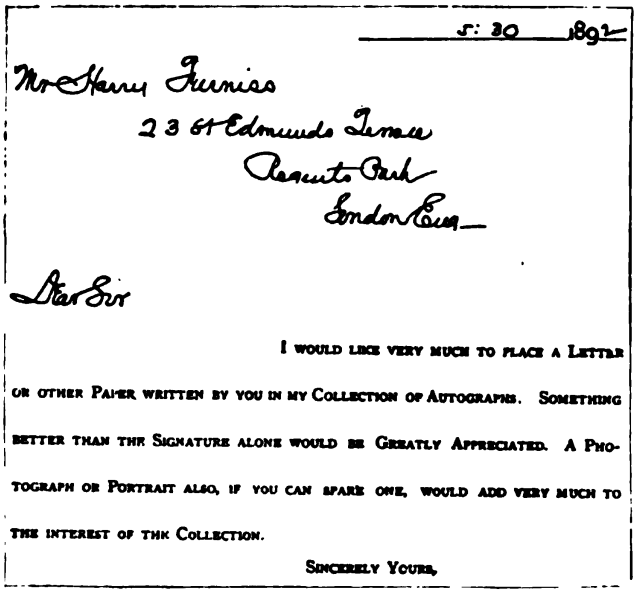


MY LITTLE JOKE.

Still, not too busy to sign their names, provided a stamped and addressed envelope is sent with the request. Some of those hunted are humorists, others are practical, others eccentric. Mr. Dan Leno is a humorist unequalled on the boards, and, judging from a note I received from a schoolboy a short time ago, he carries his jokes on just as successfully in private life: "Dear Sir,—Will you kindly favour me with your autograph, and, if not asking too much, will you add a funny little sketch? You must not be as funny as Mr. Dan Leno, for in reply to my request he sent his autograph, as he always does, by telegraph!" But I had my little joke with the little stranger who asked me for a little sketch. My reply was something like the above, which a looking-glass will render legible.

The practical side of giving autographs cannot be better illustrated than by the system practised, and, I believe, originated, by Miss Ellen Terry. The hunter must send a shilling (or is it half a crown?) for Miss Terry's charity fund, and the delightful actress's autograph is received in return. A cheap bargain for the hunter, and an excellent idea of this clever and charitable lady. The eccentric list is a long one. To illustrate the pretty side of eccentricity, and at the same time the difficulty there is in obtaining some autographs, I cannot do better than refer my reader to the following incident which was recently reported as follows: "Autograph hunters are very keen about getting the Sultan's signature. It is said that both the German Emperor and the Duke of Edinburgh tried in vain. But a few days ago the Sultan entertained the American Minister, his wife, and daughters at dinner, and, at the request of Mrs. Leishman, wrote his signature on her fan. It was only scribbled in pencil, and the next day he sent for the fan, on the pretence of rewriting it in ink. But on its return it was found that the pencil marks had been carefully erased, and a tiny 'A. H.' (Abdul Hamid) set in diamonds had taken its place." It is interesting to note that where a German Emperor and an English Duke had failed, those from the country of autograph hunters succeeded.

In America one is besieged by autograph collectors perfectly startling in their persistency. On arrival at the hall or theatre to give an entertainment, one finds a row of autograph books and their owners waiting for your autograph. Some books are too precious to be left, so the owner calls personally at your hotel; many appeals are sent through the post. Others have their appeal printed in neat type. Here is a specimen. Complimentary to a degree; but what the sender means by "something better than an autograph" is somewhat vague. A photograph, however, will suffice if—as I take it the writer infers—one has not a full-length portrait in oils ready to be dispatched immediately to Texas. This reminds me that a cousin of mine in South Africa when on a visit to England asked me for my



_____ 189_

Mr Henry Irving

2 3 & 4 Edmunds Terrace

Regents Park

London Eng.

Dear Sir

I WOULD LIKE VERY MUCH TO PLACE A LETTER OR OTHER PAPER WRITTEN BY YOU IN MY COLLECTION OF AUTOGRAPHS. SOMETHING BETTER THAN THE SIGNATURE ALONE WOULD BE GREATLY APPRECIATED. A PHOTOGRAPH OR PORTRAIT ALSO, IF YOU CAN SPARE ONE, WOULD ADD VERY MUCH TO THE INTEREST OF THE COLLECTION.

SINCERELY YOURS,

AN AMERICAN AUTOGRAPH-HUNTER'S FORM OF APPLICATION.

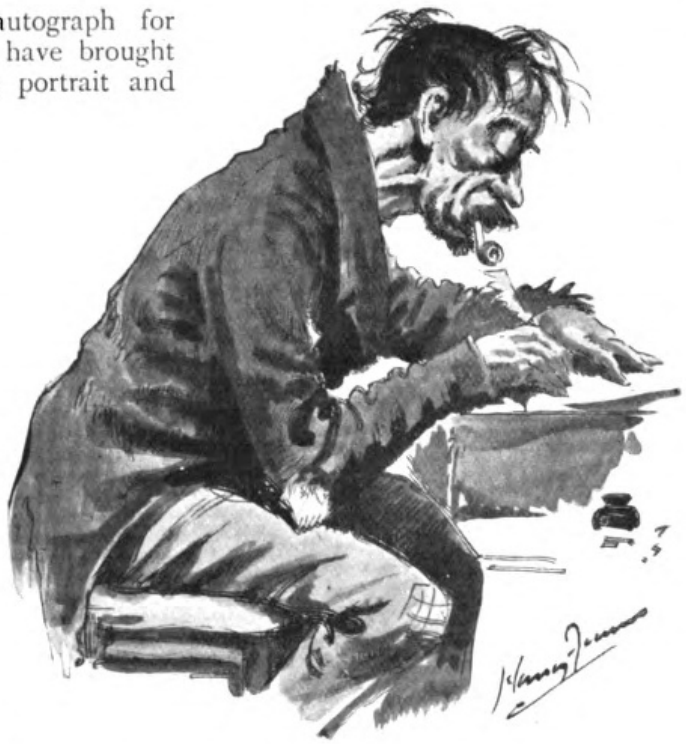
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photograph and autograph for his little girl. "I have brought you cousin Harry's portrait and autograph," he told her on his return to Africa.

"Oh, we have had them, father, for ever so long."

"Indeed! Where?"

"Just come up to the nursery. He is framed there, and his portrait is signed by himself."



COUSIN HARRY

A FAMILY PORTRAIT OF MYSELF.

In all earnestness my cousin was shown by his children an advertisement (which was, unknown to me, taken for that purpose by the proprietors of a soap, from a drawing of mine in *Punch*): "I used your soap two years ago; since then I have used no other."

The most extraordinary autograph I was ever presented with (I never asked for one in my life) was years ago while making a sketch of the most beautiful actress of that time—Mrs. Rousby. She was afraid I would miss one of the points upon which she greatly prided herself—her small and exquisitely-formed ears; and in order that I might do full justice to them she took a plaster cast of one of them out of a case in her dressing-room, and previous to presenting it to me wrote her autograph upon it. This was in 1876, when Tom Taylor's accomplished *protégée*, although still very beautiful, was quickly losing the ear of the public.
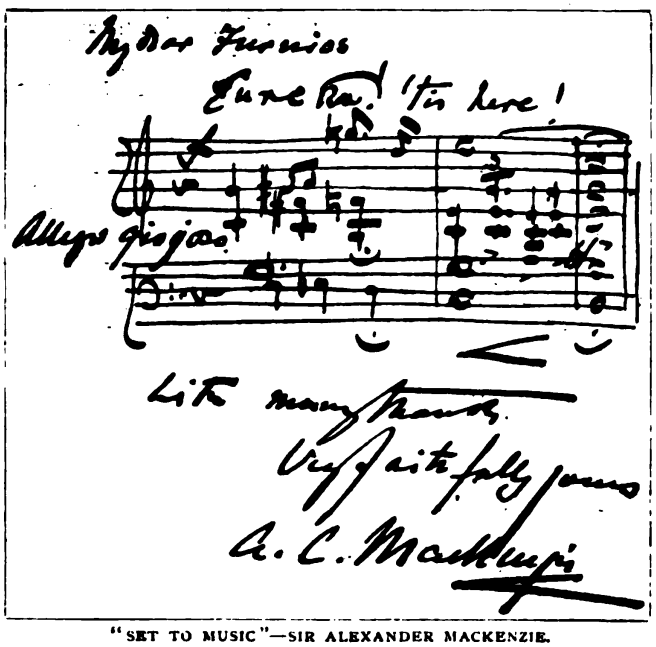
Judging from the number of autograph-hunters' books I have looked through, actresses are very easily scalped of theirs. Even I who never ask have frequently been honoured by them. Miss Mary Anderson sent me a photograph of Mr. Watts's beautiful portrait of her, with her autograph on the back.

Mrs. Brown Potter writes much in the same bold style, and gracefully knelt at the table in her dressing-room at Her Majesty's Theatre during the run of "The Three Musketeers" as she flattered me—and spelt my name wrongly! By the way, nearly all actresses write a bold hand. Talk



"MRS. BROWN POTTER FLATTERED ME—AND SPELT MY NAME WRONGLY."

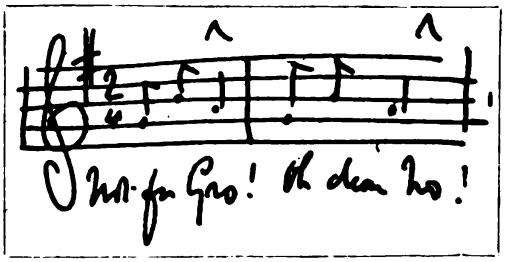
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"SET TO MUSIC"—SIR ALEXANDER MACKENZIE.

of "filling the stage," I cannot recall any of our charming actresses—particularly those hailing from America—that would not fill a paper equal in size to the largest stage with their autograph alone!

Not so with the critics. The critical mind is content in writing the most modest and neatest of hands. Writers of all kinds, as a rule, write the smallest, even the cynic. Taking one at haphazard, I find an autograph of George Bernard Shaw, which fully illustrates this fact. It is, however, not so eccentric as the writer of it. Eccentric autographs often emanate from the artistic mind. The artist embellishes his with a sketch to the musician, who returns his set to music, from the seriously clever Sir Alexander Mackenzie to the ever humorous George Grossmith.



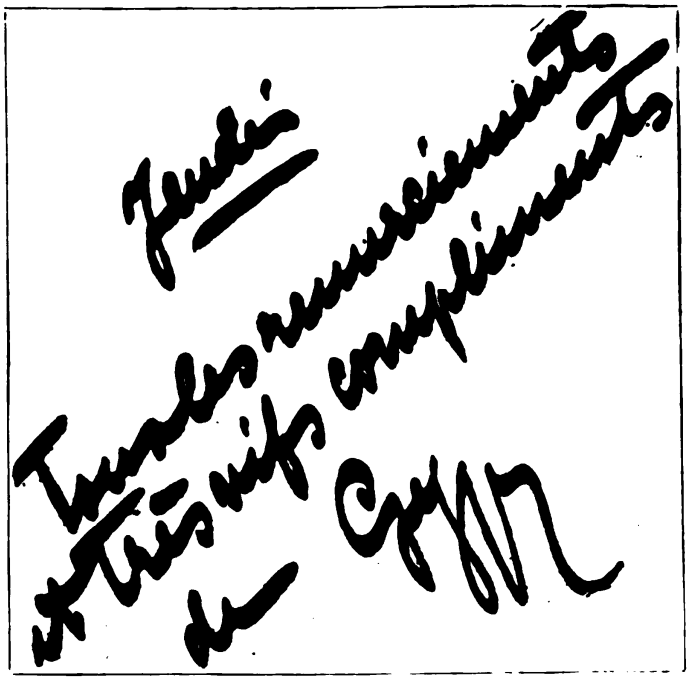
"SET TO MUSIC"—MR. GEORGE GROSSMITH.

Authoresses run actresses very hard in their eccentricity in writing. The Comtesse de Martel, better known by her *nom de plume* "Gyp," writes very much the same hand as the fair actress whose letter I have just referred to. Here is a facsimile of a note written by that charming authoress to her London publisher.

I came across the following in an "appreciation" of "Gyp": "She is always very witty, outspoken, human, occasionally impertinent, and frequently flippant." And I venture to say that you need not be a graphologist to read the truth of this by one glance at her autograph. I must not, however, introduce autographs in general; I am merely in this short chapter dealing with a few of personal interest to myself.

The common practice of signing menus at public dinners is a modern nuisance also copied from America. To have to sign dozens of cards after one has sat through a long dinner and dreary speeches is anything but a pleasant occupation to wind up with.

I shall never forget one request for my autograph. I was playing lawn tennis on the lawn of a country house — a real match for a prize. It was the semi-final, and the score was "love all"; I was the favourite. Excitement ran high. I was opposed by the youngest daughter, aged twelve, and had only her uncle, an M.P., with a poor idea of the game, to meet in the final. I had just defeated one of the young ladies who gave me thirty, and the German governess who



"GYP'S" AUTOGRAPH.

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A LITTLE INCIDENT AT LORD'S.

played me even, when at that critical moment the head gardener, Mr. MacPherson, walked straight on to the tennis lawn with his autograph book wrapped up in tissue paper, and, provided with a gardener's pencil — something like a builder's—about an inch wide, and having a stubby point one-eighth of an inch long, there and then demanded my autograph, "with just a wee bit of the face of the Grand Old Man."

I lost the match.

Sketching at Lord's one Eton and Harrow match day some years ago, a sheet of my sketch-book fell out. A very young lady I had just sketched picked it up. "Will you kindly sign this and give it to me?" Could I refuse after her politeness in bringing it to me? But these are trifles among the trials of those autographically hunted.

I have discovered a not very uncommon manœuvre of the autograph collector, who, finding that writing for autographs does not always meet with a response, writes to ask some business question: the price of a picture; your fee to give an entertainment; and may, in fact, should his family be collectors too, carry on a correspondence till the autographs are obtained. Then one hears no more. This cool impertinence I have known carried still further. Some artists cannot resist adorning their letters with sketches. To obtain that sketch requires more careful fishing on the part of the stranger. The sport to him is, therefore, all the greater. On more than one occasion I have received letters from well-to-do strangers asking me to accept a commission for a drawing.

"A slight sketch of the subject will oblige." I take the bait; the *slight* subject sketch is sent, and there the correspondence ceases. But my sketch is not returned. I have a letter to this effect which may explain the reason why. It is adorned with a coat of arms and three separate addresses after the following fashion:—

"Hav'em Hall, Do'emshire.

"The Rookery, Chislehurst.

"6, Bounder Court, Mayfair.

"SIR,—Lady Sharper and I have changed our minds. We fear your price for the drawing is more than we care to give; and as we only wanted a specimen of your work for our collection, you will be glad to learn



ROBBERY IN A FRAME.

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that we have decided to frame your autograph letter, including the sketch."

The frame-maker at least earns something for his family.

One should be careful in sending an autograph. For instance, a pretty little note from "Miss May Melrose" or from "Miss Lottie Lightfoot," written on primrose-tinted paper, enclosing a stamped and addressed envelope—care of The Creamery, West End Villas, Highgate—is not always from an enthusiastic young lady in her teens who is, in spite of her parents' protests, collecting the autographs of celebrities. It is just possible that that flattering little note is penned in the coffee-shop or public-house next door to the "Creamery" by a thorough-paced blackguard, who either sells the autograph or, worse still, uses your signature to rob you or yours. It is therefore most unwise to sign your autograph carelessly in the centre of paper.



THE YOUNG LADY IN HER TEENS.

What is to prevent "Miss May" or "Miss Lottie"—in other words, the practised thief; as practised, no doubt, in imitating handwriting as an Ireland or a Pigott—placing over your signature "I O U," or even something more elaborate, to be presented to your executors after your death, if not actually manipulated at once? It is, therefore, well to bear this in mind, and when writing your signature do not leave a space above it, but place it well on the top of the page. A safe form is as follows: "Mr. S—— has much pleasure in complying with the request for his autograph." (Here sign the name.)

There can be no hanky-panky tricks played with that.



"MISS MAY MELROSE."

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BILL'S LAPSE

BY W. W. JACOBS



STRENGTH and good-nature —said the night-watchman, musingly, as he felt his biceps —strength and good-nature always go together. Sometimes you find a strong man who is not good-natured, but then, as everybody he comes in contack with is, it comes to the same thing.

The strongest and kindest-'earted man I ever come across was a man o' the name of Bill Burton, a shipmate of Ginger Dick's. For that matter 'e was a shipmate o' Peter Russet's and old Sam Small's too. Not over and above tall; just about my height, his arms was like another man's legs for size, and 'is chest and his back and shoulders might ha' been made for a giant. And with all that he'd got a soft blue eye like a gal's (blue's my favourite colour for gals' eyes), and a nice, soft, curly brown beard. He was an A.B., too, and that showed 'ow good-natured he was, to pick up with firemen.

He got so fond of 'em that when they was all paid off from the *Ocean King* he asked to be allowed to join them in taking a room ashore. It pleased everybody, four coming cheaper than three, and Bill being that good-tempered that 'e'd put up with anything, and when any of the three quarrelled he used to act the part of peacemaker.

The only thing about 'im that they didn't like was that 'e was a teetotaler. He'd go into public-'ouses with 'em, but he wouldn't drink; leastways, that is to say, he wouldn't drink beer, and Ginger used to say that it made 'im feel uncomfortable to see Bill put away a bottle o' lemonade every time they 'ad a drink. One night arter 'e had 'ad seventeen bottles he could 'ardly get home, and Peter Russet, who knew a lot about pills and such-like, pointed out to 'im 'ow bad it was for his constitushon. He proved that the lemonade would eat away the coats o' Bill's stomach, and that if 'e kept on 'e might drop down dead at any moment.

That frightened Bill a bit, and the next night, instead of 'aving lemonade, 'e had five bottles o' stone ginger-beer, six of different kinds of teetotal beer, three of soda-water, and two cups of coffee. I'm not counting the drink he 'ad at the chemist's shop arterwards, because he took that as medicine, but he was so queer in 'is inside next morning that 'e began to be afraid he'd 'ave to give up drink altogether.

He went without the next night, but 'e was such a generous man that 'e would pay

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every fourth time, and there was no pleasure to the other chaps to see 'im pay and 'ave nothing out of it. It spoilt their evening, and owing to 'aving only about 'arf wot they was accustomed to they all got up very disagreeable next morning.

"Why not take just a *little* beer, Bill?" asks Ginger.

Bill 'ung his 'ead and looked a bit silly. "I'd rather not, mate," he ses, at last. "I've been teetotal for eleven months now."

"Think of your 'ealth, Bill," ses Peter Russet; "your 'ealth is more important than the pledge. Wot made you take it?"

Bill coughed. "I 'ad reasons," he ses, slowly. "A mate o' mine wished me to."

"He ought to ha' known better," ses Sam.

"He 'ad 'is reasons," ses Bill.

"Well, all I can say is, Bill," ses Ginger, "all I can say is, it's very disobligin' of you."

"Disobligin'?" ses Bill, with a start; "don't say that, mate."

"I must say it," ses Ginger, speaking very firm.

"You needn't take a lot, Bill," ses Sam; "nobody wants you to do that. Just drink in moderation, same as wot we do."

"It gets into my 'ead," ses Bill, at last.

"Well, and wot of it?" ses Ginger; "it gets into everybody's 'ead occasionally. Why, one night old Sam 'ere went up behind a policeman and tickled 'im under the arms; didn't you, Sam?"

"I did nothing o' the kind," ses Sam, firing up.

"Well, you was fined ten bob for it next morning, that's all I know," ses Ginger.

"I was fined ten bob for punching 'im," ses old Sam, very wild. "I never tickled a policeman in my life. I never thought o' such a thing. I'd no more tickle a policeman than I'd fly. Anybody that ses I did is a liar. Why should I? Where does the sense come in? Wot should I want to do it for?"

"All right, Sam," ses Ginger, sticking 'is fingers in 'is ears, "you didn't, then."

"No, I didn't," ses Sam, "and don't you forget it. This ain't the fust time you've told that lie about me. I can take a joke with any man; but anybody that goes and ses I tickled——"

"All *right*," ses Ginger and Peter Russet together. "You'll 'ave tickled policeman on the brain if you ain't careful, Sam," ses Peter.

Old Sam sat down growling, and Ginger Dick turned to Bill agin. "It gets into everybody's 'ead at times," he ses, "and where's the 'arm? It's wot it was meant for."

Bill shook his 'ead, but when Ginger called 'im disobligin' agin he gave way and he broke the pledge that very evening with a pint o' six 'arf.

Ginger was surprised to see the way 'e took his liquor. Arter three or four pints he'd expected to see 'im turn a bit silly, or sing, or do something o' the kind, but Bill kept on as if 'e was drinking water.

"Think of the 'armless pleasure you've been losing all these months, Bill," ses Ginger, smiling at him.

Bill said it wouldn't bear thinking of, and, the next place they came to he said some rather 'ard things of the man who'd persuaded 'im to take the pledge. He 'ad two or three more there, and then they began to see that it was beginning to have an effect on 'im. The first one that noticed it was Ginger Dick. Bill 'ad just lit 'is pipe, and as he threw the match down he ses: "I don't like these 'ere safety matches," he ses.

"Don't you, Bill?" ses Ginger. "I do, rather."

"Oh, you do, do you?" ses Bill, turning on 'im like lightning; "well, take that for contradictin'," he ses, an' he gave Ginger a smack that nearly knocked his 'ead off.

It was so sudden that old Sam and Peter put their beer down and stared at each other as if they couldn't believe their eyes. Then they stooped down and helped pore Ginger on to 'is legs agin and began to brush 'im down.

"Never mind about 'im, mates," ses Bill, looking at Ginger very wicked. "P'r'aps he won't be so ready to give me 'is lip next time. Let's come to another pub and enjoy ourselves."

Sam and Peter followed 'im out like lambs, 'ardly daring to look over their shoulder at Ginger, who was staggering arter them some distance behind a 'olding a handkerchief to 'is face.

"It's your turn to pay, Sam," ses Bill, when they'd got inside the next place. "Wot's it to be? Give it a name."

"Three 'arf pints o' four ale, miss," ses Sam, not because 'e was mean, but because it wasn't 'is turn.

"Three wot?" ses Bill, turning on 'im.

"Three pots o' six ale, miss," ses Sam, in a hurry.

"That wasn't wot you said afore," ses Bill. "Take that," he ses, giving pore old Sam a wipe in the mouth and knocking 'im over a stool; "take that for your sauce."

Peter Russet stood staring at Sam and wondering wot Bill ud be like when he'd

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'ad a little more. Sam picked hisself up arter a time and went outside to talk to Ginger about it, and then Bill put 'is arm round Peter's neck and began to cry a bit and say 'e was the only pal he'd got left in the world. It was very awkward for Peter, and more awkward still when the barman came up and told 'im to take Bill outside.

"Go on," he ses, "out with 'im."

"He's all right," ses Peter, trembling; "'e's the truest-'arted gentleman in London. Ain't you, Bill?"

Bill said he was, and 'e asked the barman to go and hide 'is face because it reminded 'im of a little dog 'e had 'ad once wot 'ad died.

"You get outside afore you're hurt," ses the barman.

Bill punched at 'im over the bar, and not being able to reach 'im threw Peter's pot o' beer at 'im. There was a fearful to-do then, and the landlord jumped over the bar and stood in the doorway, whistling for the police. Bill struck out right and left, and the men in the bar went down like skittles, Peter among them. Then they got outside, and Bill, arter giving the landlord a thump in the back wot nearly made him swallow the whistle, jumped into a cab and pulled Peter Russet in arter 'im.



"BILL JUMPED INTO A CAB AND PULLED PETER RUSSET IN ARTER 'IM."

"I'll talk to you by-and-by," he ses, as the cab drove off at a gallop; "there ain't room in this cab. You wait, my lad, that's all. You just wait till we get out, and I'll knock you silly."

"Wot for, Bill?" ses Peter, staring.

"Don't you talk to me," roars Bill. "If I choose to knock you about that's my business, ain't it? Besides, you know very well."

He wouldn't let Peter say another word, but coming to a quiet place near the docks he stopped the cab and pulling 'im out gave 'im such a dressing down that Peter thought 'is last hour 'ad arrived. He let 'im go at last, and after first making him pay the cabman took 'im along till they came to a public-'ouse and made 'im pay for drinks.

They stayed there till nearly eleven o'clock, and then Bill set off home 'olding the unfortunit Peter by the scruff o' the neck, and wondering out loud whether 'e ought to pay 'im a bit more or not. Afore 'e could make up 'is mind, however, he turned sleepy, and, throwing 'imself down on the bed which was meant for the two of 'em, fell into a peaceful sleep.

Sam and Ginger Dick came in a little while arterwards, both badly marked where Bill 'ad hit them, and sat talking to Peter in whispers as to wot was to be done. Ginger, who 'ad plenty of pluck, was for them all to set on to 'im, but Sam wouldn't 'ear of it, and as for Peter he was so sore he could 'ardly move.

They all turned in to the other bed at last, 'arf afraid to move for fear of disturbing Bill, and when they woke up in the morning and see 'im sitting up in 'is bed they lay as still as mice.

"Why, Ginger, old chap," ses Bill, with a 'earty smile, "wot are you all three in one bed for?"

"We was a bit cold," ses Ginger.

"Cold?" ses Bill. "Wot, this weather? We 'ad a bit of a spree last night, old man, didn't we? My throat's as dry as a cinder."

"It ain't my idea of a spree," ses Ginger, sitting up and looking at 'im.

"Good 'eavens, Ginger!" ses Bill, starting back, "wotever 'ave you been a-doing to your

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face? Have you been tumbling off of a 'bus?"

Ginger couldn't answer; and Sam Small and Peter sat up in bed alongside of 'im, and Bill, getting as far back on 'is bed as he could, sat staring at their pore faces as if 'e was having a 'orrible dream.

"And there's Sam," he ses. "Where ever did you get that mouth, Sam?"

"Same place as Ginger got 'is eye and pore Peter got 'is face," ses Sam, grinding his teeth.

"You don't mean to tell me," ses Bill, in a sad voice — "you don't mean to tell me that I did it?"

"You know well enough," ses Ginger.

Bill looked at 'em, and 'is face got as long as a yard measure.

"I'd 'oped I'd growed out of it, mates," he ses, at last, "but drink always takes me like that. I can't keep a pal."

"You sur-prise me," ses Ginger, sarcastic-like.

"Don't talk like that, Ginger," ses Bill, 'arf crying. "It ain't my fault; it's my weakness. Wot did I do it for?"

"I don't know," ses Ginger, "but you won't get the chance of doing it agin, I'll tell you that much."

"I daresay I shall be better to-night, Ginger," ses Bill, very humble; "it don't always take me that way."

"Well, we don't want you with us any more," ses old Sam, 'olding his 'ead very high.

"You'll 'ave to go and get your beer by yourself, Bill," ses Peter Russet, feeling 'is bruises with the tips of 'is fingers.

"But then I should be worse," ses Bill. "I want cheerful company when I'm like that. I should very likely come 'ome and 'arf kill you all in your beds. You don't 'arf know wot I'm like. Last night was nothing, else I should 'ave remembered it."

"Cheerful company?" ses old Sam. "'Ow do you think company's going to be cheerful when you're carrying on like that, Bill? Why don't you go away and leave us alone?"

"Because I've got a 'art," ses Bill. "*I* can't chuck up pals in that free-and-easy way. Once I take a liking to anybody I'd do anything for 'em, and I've never met three chaps I like better than wot I do you. Three nicer, straightforrard, free-'anded mates I've never met afore."

"Why not take the pledge agin, Bill?" ses Peter Russet.

"No, mate," ses Bill, with a kind smile; "it's just a weakness, and I must try and grow out of it. I'll tie a bit o' string round my little finger to-night as a reminder."

He got out of bed and began to wash 'is face, and Ginger Dick, who was doing a bit o' thinking, gave a whisper to Sam and Peter Russet.

"All right, Bill, old man," he ses, getting out of bed and beginning to put his clothes on; "but first of all we'll try and find out 'ow the landlord is."

"Landlord?" ses Bill, puffing and blowing in the basin. "Wot landlord?"

"Why, the one you bashed," ses Ginger, with a wink at the other two. "He 'adn't got 'is senses back when me and Sam came away."

Bill gave a groan and sat on the bed while 'e dried himself, and Ginger told 'im 'ow he 'ad bent a quart pot on the landlord's 'ead, and 'ow the landlord 'ad been carried upstairs and the doctor sent for. He began to tremble all over, and when Ginger said he'd go out and see 'ow the land lay 'e could 'ardly thank 'im enough.

Ginger was gone about two hours, and when 'e came back he looked so solemn that



"THEN 'E GOT UP AND PATTED BILL ON THE BACK, VERY GENTLE."

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old Sam asked 'im whether he 'ad seen a ghost. Ginger didn't answer 'im; he set down on the side o' the bed and sat thinking.

"I s'pose—I s'pose it's nice and fresh in the streets this morning?" ses Bill at last, in a trembling voice.

Ginger started and looked at 'im. "I didn't notice, mate," he ses. Then 'e got up and patted Bill on the back, very gentle, and sat down again.

"Anything wrong, Ginger?" asks Peter Russet, staring at 'im.

"It's that landlord," ses Ginger; "there's straw down in the road outside, and they say that he's dying. Pore old Bill don't know 'is own strength. The best thing you can do, old pal, is to go as far away as you can, at once."

"I shouldn't wait a minnit if it was me," ses old Sam.

Bill groaned and hid 'is face in his 'ands, and then Peter Russet went and spoilt things by saying that the safest place for a murderer to 'ide in was London. Bill gave a dreadful groan when 'e said murderer, but 'e up and agreed with Peter, and all Sam and Ginger Dick could do wouldn't make 'im alter his mind. He said that he would shave off 'is beard and moustache, and when night came 'e would creep out and take a lodging somewhere right the other end of London.

He stayed in the bedroom all day, with the blinds down, and wouldn't eat anything, and when Ginger looked in about eight o'clock to find out whether he 'ad gone, he found 'im sitting on the bed clean shaved, and 'is face cut about all over where the razor 'ad slipped.

"It'll soon be dark," ses Ginger, "and your own brother wouldn't know you now, Bill. Where d'you think of going?"

Bill shook his 'ead. "Nobody must know that, mate," he ses. "I must go into hiding for as long as I can—as long as my money lasts; I've only got six pounds left."

"That'll last a long time if you're careful," ses Ginger.

"I want a lot more," ses Bill. "I want you to take this silver ring as a keepsake, Ginger. If I 'ad another six pounds or so I should feel much safer. 'Ow much 'ave you got, Ginger?"

"Not much," ses Ginger, shaking his 'ead.

"Lend it to me, mate," ses Bill, stretching out his 'and. "You can easy get another ship. Ah, I wish I was you; I'd be as 'appy as 'appy if I hadn't got a penny."

"I'm very sorry, Bill," ses Ginger, trying to smile. "but I've already promised to lend it to a man wot we met this evening. A promise is a promise, else I'd lend it to you with pleasure."

"Would you let me be 'ung for the sake of a few pounds, Ginger?" ses Bill, looking at 'im reproachfully. "I'm a desprit man, Ginger, and I must 'ave that money."

Afore pore Ginger could move he suddenly clapped 'is hand over 'is mouth and flung 'im on the bed. Ginger was like a child in 'is hands, although he struggled like a madman, and in five minutes 'e was laying there with a towel tied round his mouth and 'is arms and legs tied up with the cord off of Sam's chest.

"I'm very sorry, Ginger," ses Bill, as 'e took a little over eight pounds out of Ginger's pocket. "I'll pay you back one o' these days, if I can. If you'd got a rope round your neck same as I 'ave you'd do the same as I've done."

He lifted up the bedclothes and put Ginger inside and tucked 'im up. Ginger's face was red with passion and 'is eyes starting out of his 'ead.

"Eight and six is fifteen," ses Bill, and just then he 'eard somebody coming up the stairs. Ginger 'eard it, too, and as Peter Russet came into the room 'e tried all 'e could to attract 'is attention by rolling 'is 'ead from side to side.

"Why, 'as Ginger gone to bed?" ses Peter. "Wot's up, Ginger?"

"He's all right," ses Bill; "just a bit of a 'eadache."

Peter stood staring at the bed, and then 'e pulled the clothes off and saw pore Ginger all tied up, and making awful eyes at 'im to undo him.

"I 'ad to do it, Peter," ses Bill. "I wanted some more money to escape with, and 'e wouldn't lend it to me. I 'aven't got as much as I want now. You just came in in the nick of time. Another minute and you'd ha' missed me. 'Ow much 'ave you got?"

"Ah, I wish I could lend you some, Bill," ses Peter Russet, turning pale, "but I've 'ad my pocket picked; that's wot I come back for, to get some from Ginger."

Bill didn't say a word.

"You see 'ow it is, Bill," ses Peter, edging back towards the door; "three men laid 'old of me and took every farthing I'd got."

"Well, I can't rob you, then," ses Bill, catching 'old of 'im. "Whoever's money this is," he ses, pulling a handful out o' Peter's pocket, "it can't be yours. Now, if you make another sound I'll knock your 'ead off afore I tie you up."

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"Don't tie me up, Bill," ses Peter, struggling.

"I can't trust you," ses Bill, dragging 'im over to the washstand and taking up the other towel; "turn round."

Peter was a much easier job than Ginger Dick, and arter Bill 'ad done 'im 'e put 'im in alongside o' Ginger and covered 'em up, arter first tying both the gags round with some string to prevent 'em slipping.

"Mind, I've only borrowed it," he ses, standing by the side o' the bed; "but I must say, mates, I'm disappointed in both of you. If either of you 'ad 'ad the misfortune wot I've 'ad, I'd have sold the clothes off my back to 'elp you. And I wouldn't 'ave waited to be asked neither."

He stood there for a minute very sorrowful, and then 'e patted both their 'eads and went downstairs. Ginger and Peter lay listening for a bit, and then they turned their pore bound-up faces to each other and tried to talk with their eyes.

Then Ginger began to wriggle and try and twist the cords off, but 'e might as well 'ave tried to wriggle out of 'is skin. The worst of it was they couldn't make known their intentions to each other, and when Peter Russet leaned over 'im and tried to work 'is gag off by rubbing it up agin 'is nose, Ginger pretty near went crazy with temper. He banged Peter with his 'ead, and Peter banged back, and they kept it up till they'd both got splitting 'eadaches, and at last they gave up in despair and lay in the darkness waiting for Sam.

And all this time Sam was sitting in the Red Lion, waiting for them. He sat there quite patient till twelve o'clock and then walked slowly 'ome, wondering wot 'ad happened and whether Bill 'ad gone.

Ginger was the fust to 'ear 'is foot on the stairs, and as he came into the room, in the darkness, him an' Peter Russet started shaking their bed in a way that scared old Sam nearly to death. He thought it was Bill carrying on agin, and 'e was out o' that door and 'arf-way downstairs afore he stopped to take breath. He stood there trembling for about ten minutes, and then, as nothing 'appened, he walked slowly upstairs agin on tiptoe, and as soon as they heard the door creak Peter and Ginger made that bed do everything but speak.

"Is that you, Bill?" ses old Sam, in a shaky voice, and standing ready to dash downstairs agin.

There was no answer except for the bed, and Sam didn't know whether Bill was dying or whether 'e 'ad got delirium trimmings. All 'e did know was that 'e wasn't going to sleep in that room. He shut the door gently and went downstairs agin, feeling in 'is pocket for a match, and, not finding one, 'e picked out the softest stair he could find and, leaning his 'ead agin the banisters, went to sleep.

It was about six o'clock when 'e woke up, and broad daylight. He was stiff and sore all over, and feeling braver in the light 'e stepped softly upstairs and opened the door. Peter and Ginger was waiting for 'im, and as he peeped in 'e saw two things sitting up in



"'E PICKED OUT THE SOFTEST STAIR HE COULD FIND."

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bed with their 'air standing up all over like mops and their faces tied up with bandages. He was that startled 'e nearly screamed, and then 'e stepped into the room and stared at 'em as if he couldn't believe 'is eyes.

"Is that you, Ginger?" he ses. "Wot d'ye mean by making sights of yourselves like that? 'Ave you took leave of your senses?"

Ginger and Peter shook their 'eads and rolled their eyes, and then Sam see wot was the matter with 'em. Fust thing 'e did was to pull out 'is knife and cut Ginger's gag off, and the fust thing Ginger did was to call 'im every name 'e could lay his tongue to.

"You wait a moment," he screams, 'arf crying with rage. "You wait till I get my 'ands loose and I'll pull you to pieces. The idea o' leaving us like this all night, you old crocodile. I 'eard you come in. I'll pay you."

Sam didn't answer 'im. He cut off Peter Russet's gag, and Peter Russet called 'im 'arf a score o' names without taking breath.

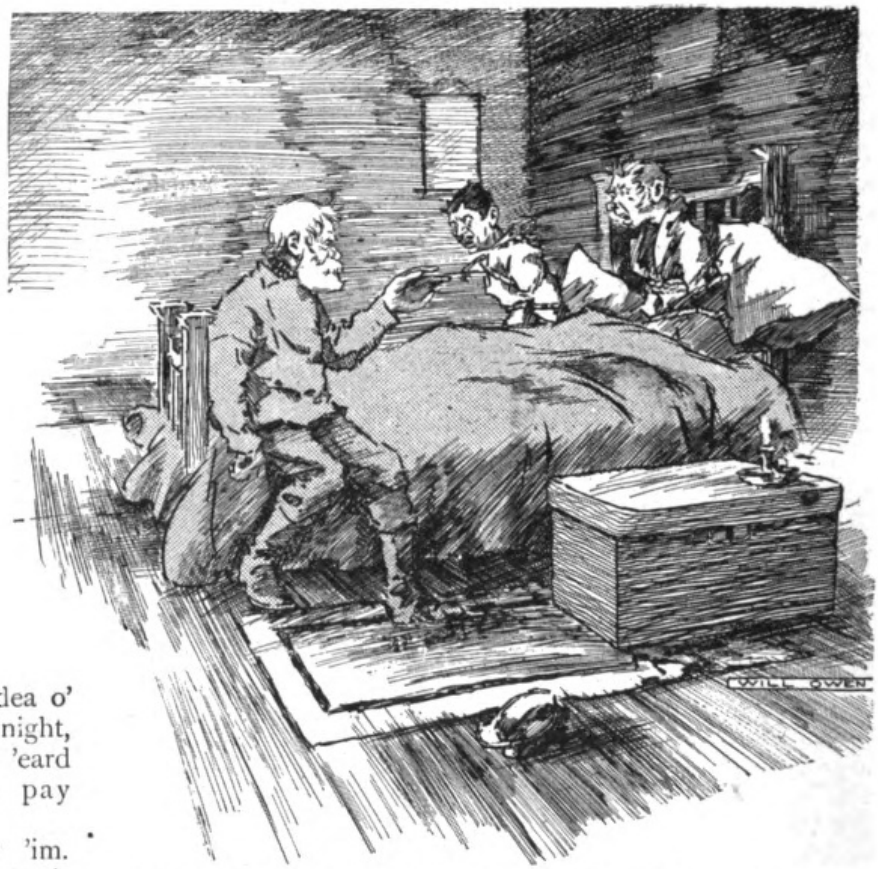
"And when Ginger's finished I'll 'ave a go at you," he ses. "Cut off these lines."

"At once, d'ye 'ear?" ses Ginger. "Oh, you wait till I get my 'ands on you."

Sam didn't answer 'em; he shut up 'is knife with a click and then 'e sat at the foot o' the bed on Ginger's feet and looked at 'em. It wasn't the fust time they'd been rude to 'im, but as a rule he'd 'ad to put up with it. He sat and listened while Ginger swore 'imself faint.

"That'll do," he ses, at last; "another word and I shall put the bedclothes over your 'ead. Afore I do anything more I want to know wot it's all about."

Peter told 'im, arter fust calling 'im some more names, because Ginger was past it, and when 'e'd finished old Sam said 'ow surprised he was at them for letting Bill do it, and told 'em how they ought to 'ave prevented it. He sat there talking as though 'e enjoyed the sound of 'is own voice, and he told Peter and Ginger all their faults and said wot sorrow it caused their friends. Twice he 'ad to throw the bedclothes over their 'eads because o' the noise they was making.



"OLD SAM SAID 'OW SURPRISED HE WAS AT THEM FOR LETTING BILL DO IT.'

"*Are—you—going—to undo—us?*" ses Ginger, at last.

"No, Ginger," ses old Sam; "in justice to myself I couldn't do it. Arter wot you've said—and arter wot I've said—my life wouldn't be safe. Besides which, you'd want to go shares in my money."

He took up 'is chest and marched downstairs with it, and about 'arf an hour arterwards the landlady's 'usband came up and set 'em free. As soon as they'd got the use of their legs back they started out to look for Sam, but they didn't find 'im for nearly a year, and as for Bill, they never set eyes on 'im agin.

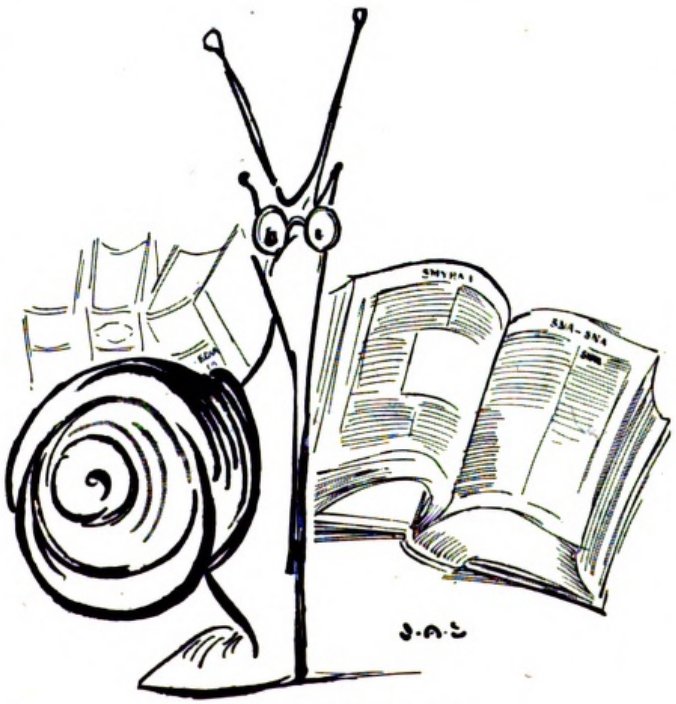
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The Arcadian Calendar.



By E. D. Cuming and J. A. Shepherd.

TWO complaints have reached me concerning these papers: one (whose justice I should regretfully admit did it extend to every species of which mention has been made), that the snails have not received their meed of attention; the other, that "the writer displays an almost morbid antipathy to scientific terminology." Again I plead guilty: I feel shy in the company of these great words; do not understand them; experience none of that exaltation of spirit their society inspires in some people. But if scientific terminology be desired let us face it boldly. Limelight, please, for Miss Polly Syllabics: "The Pneumonochlamyda, represented in England by the common genus Cyclostoma, have a twisted visceral nerve-loop, an operculum on the foot, a complex rhipidoglossate or tænioglossate radula, and are of distinct sexes: they are, in fact, Ozygobranchiate Streptoneura." I know this is so, because I copied it out of the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, myself; the writer is describing certain snails. The snails ought to have gone to bed for the winter by this time, closing their doors with a home-made stopper of lime-like material, which hardens quickly to keep the cold out; any snail who happens to hear such remarks as the foregoing about his relations will, no doubt, promptly retire. You remember the indignation of the Dublin apple-woman who was called a parallelogram? Let us turn to more popular themes.



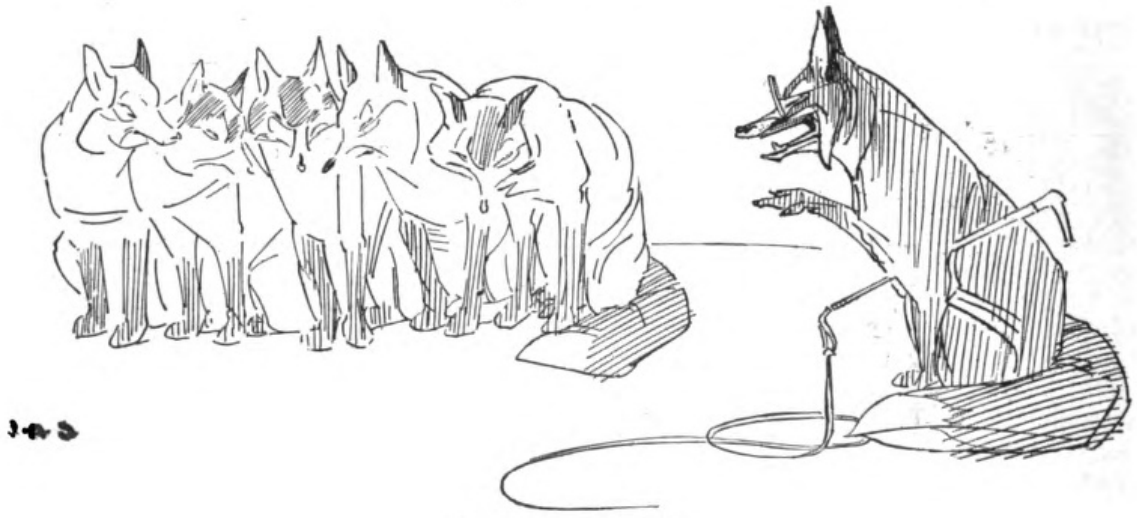
"The indignant snail."

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The First of November sees every vixen's son promoted. Yesterday he was a cub; to-day he is a fox and every foxhound's lawful prey. If fortunate in his parents he has received plenty of good advice, and the crowning lecture, we may suppose, was delivered last night:—

The duty of the fox is this—
To run with all celerity;
Don't dally when you hear a hound,
He speaks to let you know you're found,
And ere you can get safe to ground
Are ten—or twenty—miles to go
To that snug head of earths you know;
Start, then, with prompt temerity.

His history who tarries long
Is writ with painful brevity:
Safest the fox that runneth straight;
He who'd be master of his fate
Beginneth soon and stoppeth late.
His refuge gained, he hears men say,
"Leave him to run another day,"
With pardonable levity.



"THE DUTY OF A FOX."

If legs should fail and breath be spent,
Then use your rare sagacity.
Turn, twist and creep, climb, crouch, and leap,
Poke up a friend, run through the sheep,
Who'd keep his brush his head must keep;
The dullest fox that ever ran
Can baffle hounds—unhelped of man—
By cunning and audacity.

And when at last you go to join
The brushless great majority,
There shall arise to sing your fame,
As one who really knew the game
And well and truly played the same,
Some one among the sons of men
Whose life-won lore and ready pen
Have crowned him an authority.

It is at this season that the thievish magpie exhibits another ugly side of his character. When the fox is trying to escape from hounds the magpie enjoys nothing so much as to follow him from tree to tree overhead, shrieking the magpie equivalent for "Tally-ho!" Why he should do this, unless with the idea of currying favour with his worst enemy—man—it is hard to say, for he has much less reason to hate the fox than have many other birds. The rooks, on the other hand, are often helpful and obliging. In autumn and winter they assemble in great flocks in the pastures, and the scent of a fox is almost as hard to follow over ground on which rooks are feeding as it is through a flock of sheep.

It is against the principles of the hare to run straight; she makes a "bee-line" for a few fields—a mile or so—then, bethinking her that she does not know the country ahead, makes a tremendous leap to right or left, and starts off again at right angles to her original path, eventually coming back to the field she lives in. It is a paradox to say a hare is not hare-brained, but nobody who has hunted with harriers will deny her intelligence; she has as many dodges as a fox: a favourite trick is to run back in her own track, spring to one side, and crouch down, laughing at the hounds as they sweep past. When they are gone she hops away in the opposite direction. Generally speaking, a hare only runs straight for a long way when in strange country. The fallow deer, who is occasionally hunted by harriers, has a trick something like the hare's: hearing hounds in his rear and feeling disinclined for exercise, he will canter past a clump of bush, and with a big, sidelong jump alight in the middle of it; there he crouches down, spreading himself out so flat on the ground that anyone who did not know the device would be almost sure to overlook him.

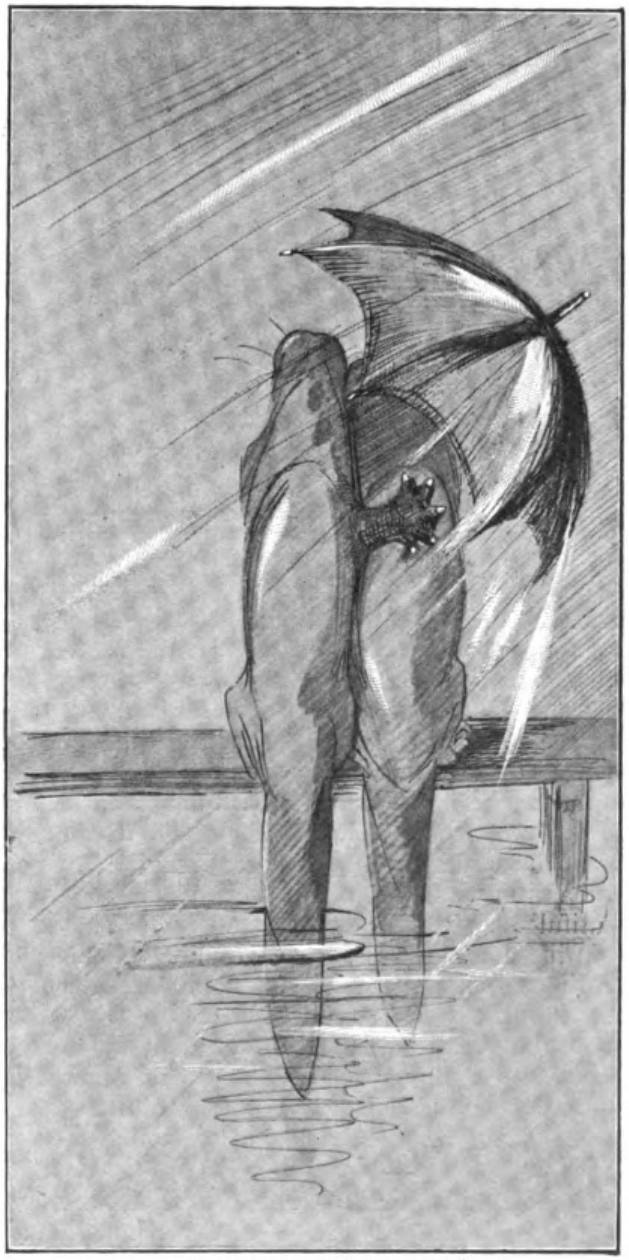
After a month's holiday, to permit the red

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deer to attend to their private affairs, hind-stalking begins during the first ten days of November. Some people pretend to hold hind-shooting lightly as a poor form of sport, but those having knowledge approach the hind with even more scrupulous respect than they stalk the stag: he is wary enough, but his wives suspect an enemy even sooner than he does, and don't wait to ascertain particulars.

The ptarmigan has donned his white dress by the middle of the month. He has been changing his clothes continually ever since June; in fact, this child of vanity only wears the same suit for more than three months together in winter; by March he begins to change his white for his wedding dress, which is perfect by April; in June the ornithological eye detects the beginning of new alterations, which go on till August, when he begins to wear the blue-grey suit which gradually gives way to white.

The mole takes up quarters in his winter fortress, or monastery—a wonderful system of circular galleries in some hillock with passages to one central chamber, whither he retires from time to time to sleep on a bed of dry grass and leaves. This establishment is distinct from the summer residence and the nursery, and seems to be shared by a community; at all events, no private right of way is acknowledged, for as many as twenty-four moles have been trapped at the same point in one tunnel. When frost comes and drives the worms deep into the earth the mole simply turns up his sleeves and digs straight down after them. There is reason to suppose that the otters generally talk of love and marriage about this season; young ones have been found as early as October and as late as February; but the otter does not encourage any display of interest in his private affairs — it would be strange if he did when you remember that he has been hunted assiduously all the summer, and only owes his survival to his superior swimming and diving powers. His wife brings up her children, three, four, or five, in a hole in the river-bank: the passage slopes gently upwards from the front door, which is at the water's edge, so the nursery is not in danger of flood: the otters are always coming in wet, so the house cannot be a very comfortable habitation. Mrs. Otter is a careful mother; when her children are able to go out she always goes first to make sure there are no enemies lurking near; a strict disciplinarian, she has been seen to take a refractory child by the neck and duck it, kindly but thoroughly, to bring it to its senses.



"THE OTTERS TALK OF LOVE."

The hedgehog puts on his nightcap when beetles disappear, snails close their doors, and frost drives the earth-worms to the deeper depths where he cannot get them; hence his bed-time depends much on the character of the season. He makes his winter

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dormitory in a dry bank, under brushwood, or—very commonly—inside the hollow trunk of some decayed tree. He arranges his enveloping blanket of withered moss and leaves so cleverly that it is impossible to discover where he got into it, and there he sleeps, rolled tightly up in a ball.



"THE HEDGEHOG PUTS ON HIS NIGHTCAP."

The weather has still great influence on the arrangements of migratory birds. The fieldfares usually flock southward late in September or in October; but on the 24th of November, 1897, the keepers of the Flamborough Lighthouse reported a great rush of fieldfares, which lasted all night, and it was remarked that this rush followed a heavy snowfall in Scotland. Happy fieldfares! No packing up, no trouble about houses, not even half an hour's trial of temper with "Bradshaw"; the same simple, sensible idea, "Let's go where it's warmer," enters their ten thousand minds at the same instant, and with beautiful unanimity they start with windy roar of wings. A cold snap farther north always brings birds of one species or another southward, and thus migration movements go on intermittently all through the winter. Swallows and martins leave a few of their number behind every autumn, particularly if the weather be mild; then they sometimes linger in the South of England even to December. The snow-buntings are among the later birds to seek refuge with us; a few spend the whole year in this country, but choose the coldest situation possible for residence—to wit, the mountains in the Highlands. Mr. Abel Chapman remarks that the flocks of snow-buntings which appear so punctually on the 1st of November on the border moorlands are almost all young birds; the grown-up ones come later, but are never very numerous. Perhaps the seniors are hardier, and allow the youngsters to winter with us as a concession to youth and delicacy. Comes also the short-eared or woodcock owl, who differs from most of his relatives in that he very often hunts by day; he prefers the open moorland to more civilized localities, but regulates his preferences by the facilities for marketing; and where field-mice and field-voles are plentiful there will you find the short-eared owl. They stay and bring up their children in this country when sufficient inducement offers. Thus, when the vole plague was ruining farmers in the Scottish border counties in 1892–93, these owls



FATHER OWL: "VOLES AGAIN! REALLY, MY DEAR, THE HOUSEKEEPING!"

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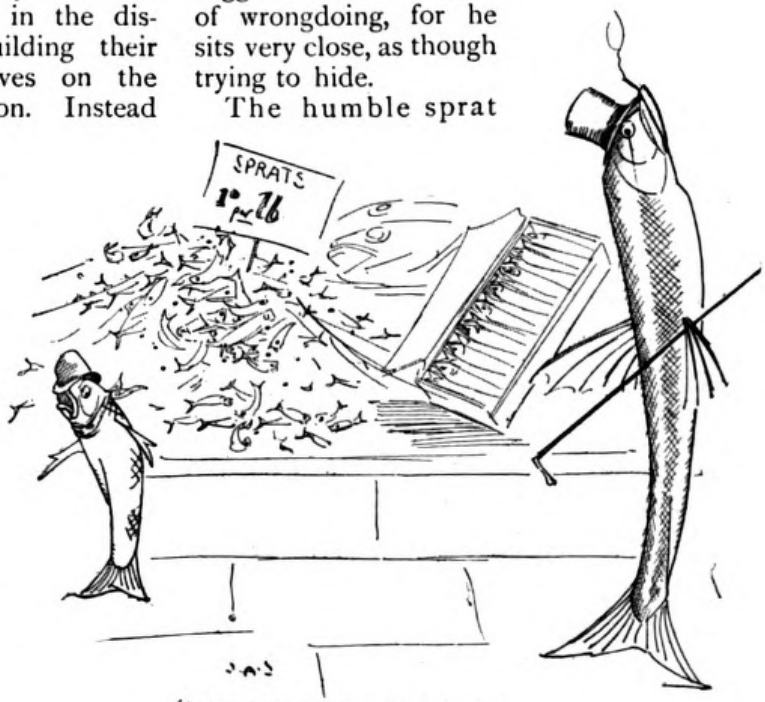


"A FATAL COLD."

declared for man in the war he was waging, and rose to the occasion splendidly. Departing from their usual routine, they mobilized their forces and settled down in the disturbed area in hundreds, building their nests and quartering themselves on the district as an army of occupation. Instead of rearing their usual half-dozen children, they nobly put personal considerations out of sight and went to the trouble of rearing ten or a dozen; and they and their children ate voles day and night, till you would have thought the very sight of a vole must make them ill. They rendered yeoman's service in stamping out these guerilla bands of mice, and they had their reward—the people didn't shoot them.

Some of the birds who nest in colonies consider this a favourable season to call and see how things are going on at their old nurseries. The rooks assemble at the rookery and spend an hour or two, talking a good deal but doing nothing so far as human eyes can see. Of course, it may be that they are a building committee settling sites in advance for next spring; but if this be their mission, one can only conclude that their decisions are subject to much revision when business begins in March. Occasionally, if the season be mild, a pair of rooks are seized with a craving to plunge into family affairs at once. They may succeed in bringing off their ill-timed family, but a few days of frost will probably give the eggs a fatal cold. The black-headed gulls go in a body to the gullery and swoop around and scream at one another, but do not linger very long; their visit seems to be a duty visit and might as well be omitted altogether. The cheery dipper leaves the sheltered streams and low grounds and betakes himself to the hills. The dipper's demeanour suggests consciousness of wrongdoing, for he sits very close, as though trying to hide.

The humble sprat



"SOLD LIKE SHRIMPS TO A CARTER BEFORE THE EYES OF UPSTART SMELT."

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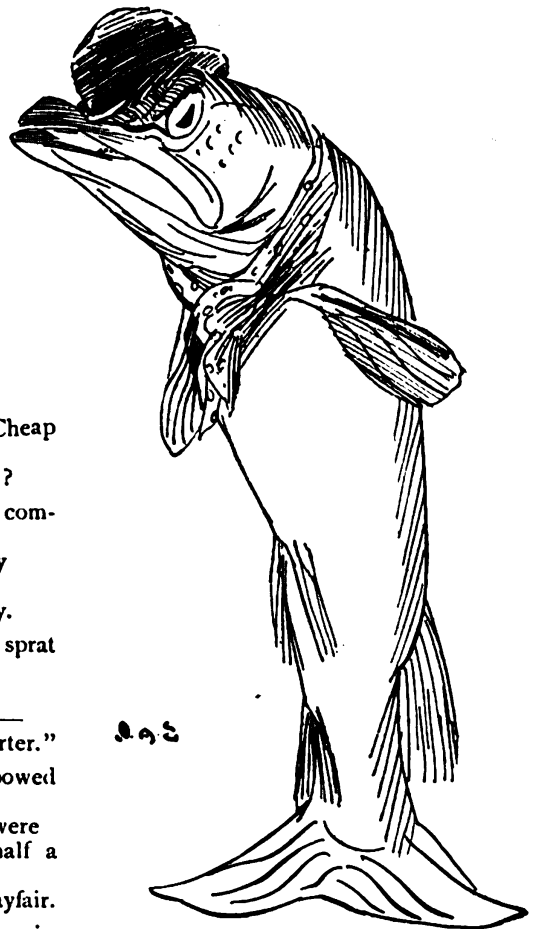
appears in heaps on the fishmonger's slab. In his youth he masqueraded as whitebait, and the reception accorded him at a riper age must be a terrible blow to his self-esteem :—

"Why are we treated in this way?
It is not what we're used to.
Grown-up whitebait are 'Cheap to-day'!
Is this what we're reduced to?

"Of being cheap, though we complain,
What we feel far more deeply
Is, you a dainty fish disdain
Because they sell him cheaply.

"Ah! The pangs that the sprat has felt
Sold like shrimps to a carter
Before the eyes of upstart smelt—
Bought for Knights of the Garter."

Good little fish, with hearts bowed down,
That is the world its way; were
Twopence a pound made half a crown,
Then you should feed all Mayfair.



"THE PIKE HAS A PRICE UPON HIS HEAD."

The pike is at his best in winter; that is to say, he is readier in cold weather to take a bait, for his merits on the table, in the present scribe's opinion, depend entirely upon the stuffing wherewith he shall be stuffed. The pike has fallen from a high estate. In Edward I.'s time he was set above the salmon and everybody was eager to get him. In H.M. Edward VII.'s time angling associations set a price upon his head as for vermin. There be those who say that the pike, like the eel, can work his way overland; but the water must fall low indeed before he prefers to get out and walk. The eel does do this: like the famous American river-steamer he can go where it is damp: but stories like that of the gardener who declared he had caught eels in the kitchen garden stealing his young peas must be accepted with reserve. Many fish, both sea and river, seek an equable climate in the deep waters as winter draws near; the carp goes a long step farther, for he hibernates; if it be cold at this time of the year, he calls his friends and neighbours round him, and they huddle together in the mud. The carp is, moreover, eccentric in his unfishlike independence of water; he can live for hours out of his element. Three ten-pound carp were once sent from Windsor to Southport, packed in wet moss; they were thirteen hours on the journey, but two arrived fresh and cheerful, while the third, though a little faint, speedily recovered when put into water. The barbel, a "sweete fysshe but a quasy meate," as Dame Juliana Berners calls him, does not hibernate like the carp, but when the weeds die off in the cold the barbel congregate in large numbers under some tree-root, log, or sunken boat in deep water, and there remain in a



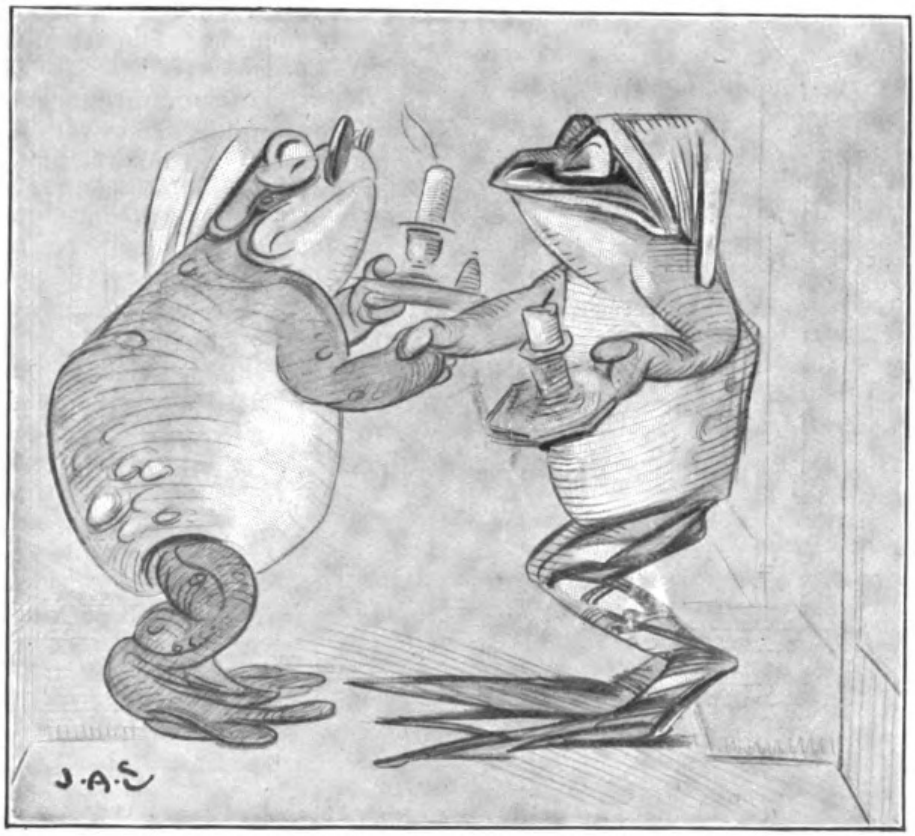
"TWO OF THE CARP ARRIVED FRESH AND CHEERFUL."

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lethargic state till spring. Whether fish sleep or not is a debated point.

It was supposed formerly that the badger stayed in bed all winter; he does so in colder climates than ours, Sweden for example, but in England he regulates his arrangements by the temperature; hating cold, he won't go out for a walk in the snow if he can help it, but stays abed sucking his fingers—a childish habit which he perhaps gets from his distant cousin, the bear. If disturbed in his repose he soon demonstrates that he was not very sound asleep, for he is quite ready to fight; and here it may be remarked our seventeenth-century friend, Mr. Topsell, was wrong when he said of the badger: "Her manner is to fight on her back, using thereby both her teeth and her nails, and by blowing up her skin above measure after an unknown manner she defendeth herself." Any self-respecting badger would be horrified at the idea of fighting like that.

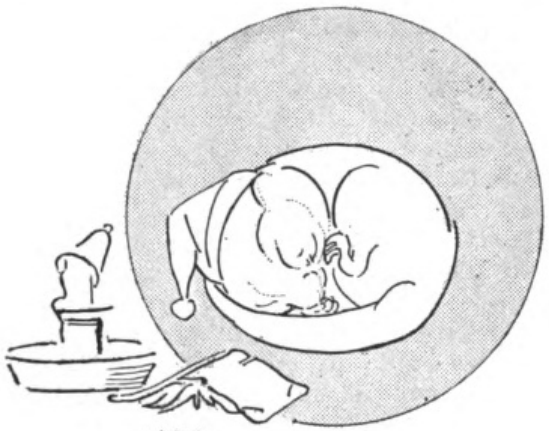
Reptiles retire now, if they have not gone before; the vipers are said to assemble and twine lovingly together for their winter sleep. If they do it is the only time these unattractive creatures display any taste for society. The frog and toad retire to their respective bedrooms: the latter is easily satisfied in the matter of accommodation; a hole in a rubbish heap suits him nicely; but he will gratefully accept permission to put up for a few months in the coal-hole and take his chance of being brought to untimely light by the cook turning over the slack, into which he luxuriously sinks as it were a feather-bed. The young dormice, having made the most of their first summer, yawn and get to work to prepare their winter nests: sometimes the dormouse sleeps on his back with his nose in the air, but his usual attitude is curled up with his hands pressed against his cheeks, his tail turned forward towards his head, and his back uppermost. A tame dormouse who weighed thirty-seven grains when she went to sleep on the 2nd of October (apparently she approved early hours) had lost eleven grains, or nearly a third of her weight, when she was weighed on the 27th of March. She finally awoke on the 9th of April, having slept six months and eleven days, with one brief interval: she got up on the 31st of December—presumably to see the Old Year out.



"THE FROG AND TOAD RETIRE TO THEIR RESPECTIVE BEDROOMS."

The squirrel dons his warm winter coat with bushy tail and those long ear "pencils" which do so much to improve his appearance. He is too active and restless a being to

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"THE DORMOUSE SLEEPS."

squander the winter months in idle sloth, and though, hating rain and damp, he sometimes stays in bed for days together in wet weather, you may see him any fine day in winter, racing and jumping about the trees in the best of spirits :—

"What ! Go to bed," the squirrel said, "because it's wintry weather !
Stay up with me and you shall see what games we'll play together.

"You fear the cold ? That plea is old ; my friend, you're talking folly.
If you come out and jump about, you'll soon be warm and jolly.

"Look ! here's a ball for what they call 'Ping Pong' or 'Table Tennis' ;
What's in a name ? It is a game that much admired of men is.

'Here come the rats who bring their bats, also the moles and rabbits ;
Dear hedgehog stay with us and play, renouncing lazy habits !"

"Nay ! I'll to bed," the hedgehog said. "For you the cold all right is ;
Not so for me, because, you see, I'm subject to bronchitis.

"I *might* bear cold, but must be told where food is and the way there ;
I must have meat or, I repeat, I'll go to bed and stay there."

By the end of November the birds who left us in autumn have taken up their residence where they mean to spend the winter. The spotted fly-catcher has been found late this month at Newcastle, in Natal ; so has the willow warbler ; while quail have been reported as "swarming" near Maritzburg, in which locality they breed. The red-backed shrikes winter in Mashonaland and in other parts of Central South Africa, and, sometimes at least, bring up families there before they come back to confer the benefits of their society on Europe in the spring ; the greater number of shrikes appear to prefer the Nile Valley and East Coast route when southward bound. The common white-throat is easily pleased as to winter quarters ; any part of Africa from Algiers to the south-central regions of the continent suit him. The swallows are abundant in many parts of South Africa by this time : whether they turn their attention to domestic affairs is not certain, but some individuals may do so. The robin is common now in Palestine ; the winter climate there agrees with him ; and as the people there do not eat him he is quite as forward and self-confident in the Holy Land as he is in England.



"THE ROBIN IN PALESTINE."

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The Guardian of the Pulwani.

By Frank Savile.

"GOOD-BYE, old chap, good-bye!"

The train had already begun to move before Mannering jumped aboard. He leaned on the rail, waving his hand and shouting cheerily.

"Before next hot weather, then, I shall expect you," he cried. "I'll take no denial. I dare say we shall raise no end of entertainment out of the cattle-lifters."

"I don't doubt that," I answered, at the top of my voice, for the mail was already thundering over the points outside the station. As I watched the red tail-lights fade into the night I smiled to myself. Entertainment was little likely to be lacking where Arthur Mannering was concerned. More extraordinary incidents happened to him in a month than to most slow-going individuals in the course of their natural lives. It was the nature of the man to be the storm-centre of his surroundings. His whole life had been a tacit revolt against the commonplace.

His start at the age of fourteen was in the Navy. He was in Egypt, saw fighting, and won the Distinguished Service Order. After that a year on survey duty wearied him of the piping times of peace. He left the sea to study engineering on the land, but by the time he was seventeen he began to yearn again for the companionable life of the servants of the Crown, and deserted the machine shops and chemical laboratories to cram for Woolwich, into which he passed with honours. When he left he took a place that entitled him to a commission in the Sappers. He was sent out to India.

He brought all his hard-won knowledge of mechanics to bear upon his profession, and nearly broke his heart in battering against the many departmental doors which the War Office has barricaded with fold on fold of red tape. It is possible that he would have thrown up the Service within a year of his appointment had not six months' active campaigning given him a vent for his activities. During the Manzai Expedition, at least, he was perfectly happy. He passed through many perils, won no further distinctions, but endeared himself to all with whom he came in contact. He was left as part of the small army of occupation that held the conquered district.

Here the extraordinary ascendency he had gained over his fellow-countrymen was transferred to the frontier caterans. Alone, and practically unarmed, he would stroll out into the hill fastnesses, and return, jauntily assuring his superiors that much education and entertainment were to be had for the asking within rifle-shot of the barrack-yard to which they clung. He reappeared, now and again, with some swarthy tribesman, to whom he would offer weird hospitalities, and with whom he would converse in strange jargons. And now he had just received the Deputy Commissionership of the Pulwani, that restless district along the borderlands of Tibet and the Pamirs. Before we parted at the station he had given me a warm invitation to spend part, at least, of my next leave with him.

And so it came to pass that about the middle of the March following our farewells I found myself on the back of a Cashmeri pony, attended by half-a-dozen Luzai cut-throats, stumbling up the long ravine that cuts the Pulwani like the slash of a sabre.

It was near the falling of the dusk as we rounded a corner of the cliff and discovered ourselves to any watchers on the walls of Fort Nagar—the grey stone ramparts of which crown a precipitous peak in the centre of the ravine. I noted the preposterous size of the flagstaff that towered above the compound, and was about to make a remark to one of my followers in my halting Luzai when I received an unexpected interruption.

There was the report of an explosion from the cliffside upon my right, and a column of smoke swirled up from the crag top. My attendants dropped to their knees, bowed towards it, and, as they sprang again to their feet, regarded me with increased respect. Before I could speak a second report followed—this time from the left. Again my attendants prostrated themselves, and with even deeper obeisances.

"Do they shoot blank cartridge in sign of welcome?" I asked. The headman smiled.

"That was no gunshot, sahib. The djinns of the Commissioner Sahib welcome you and assure you of their protection. They are everywhere abroad upon the hills."

I stared at him blankly.

"What foolish talk is this?" I asked. "Djinns? Who can control the spirits of the earth and air?"

"They are the servants of Mannering Sahib," said the man, confidently.

I looked at him with no little surprise. I knew, of course, that it would be impossible

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to convince a Mohammedan, much less a Luzai, that such things as djinns and afreets—the spirits that are supposed to control all natural phenomena—do not exist. But even from the point of view of a Mussulman I could not understand how an Englishman—a dog of an unbeliever—could be credited with such powers. But the question that hovered on my lips was anticipated by a third report. Azim Khan turned and waved his hands excitedly.

"Look, sahib!" he cried. "Look well!"

I wheeled round to see again a slender column of smoke that wavered off into the still evening air. The sunset was behind it. It was distinctly outlined by the gold and crimson glories of the sky.

I rubbed my eyes. It seemed quite certain that it was an exact profile that had hovered over the stones before it dissolved into nothingness, and just as certain that the profile had been a human one. This I told myself could only be a coincidence, but at the same time I was mightily puzzled to explain the presence of the smoke at all. The plateau from which it arose was bare and coverless. There was no shelter from which a shot could be fired.

I stared at Azim. With a good deal of confident satisfaction he stared back.

"The sahib has seen?" he murmured.

I shrugged my shoulders.

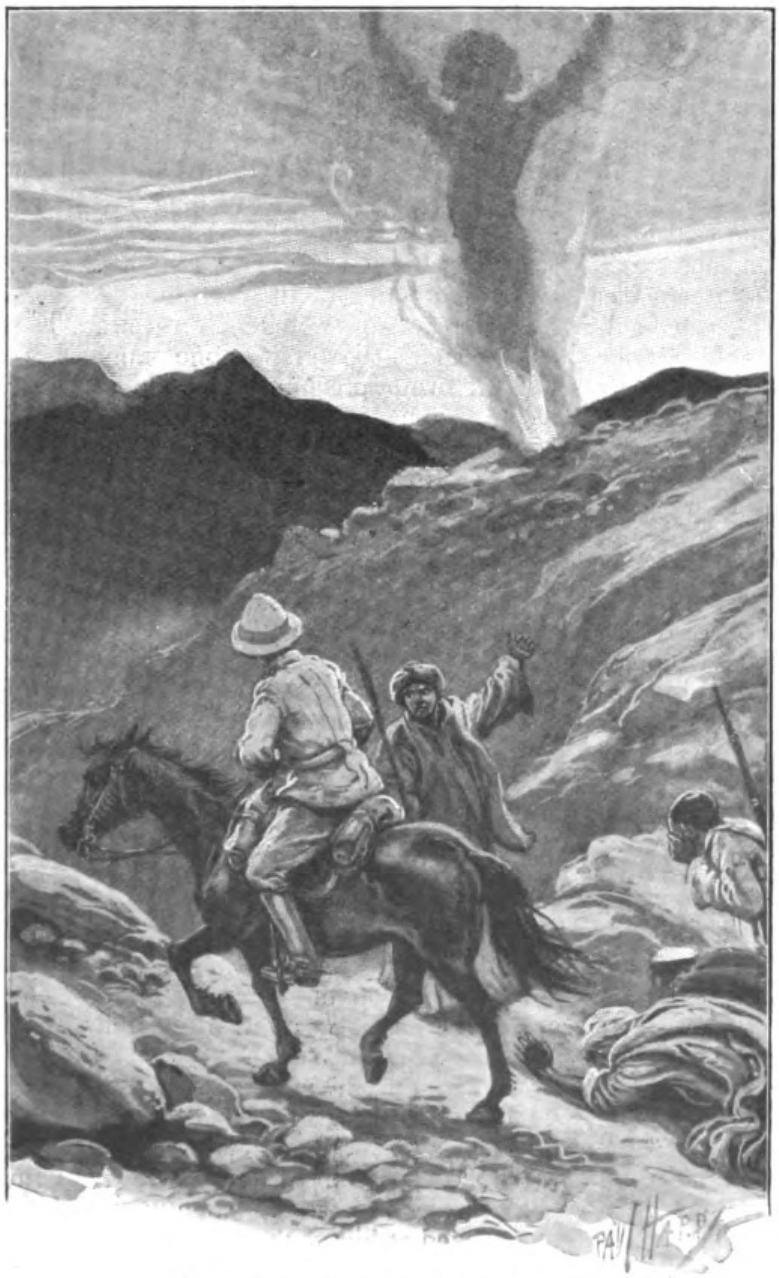
"I saw—smoke," I admitted.

"Even so, sahib. They have no bodily presence—these servants of Mannering Sahib. Yet it cannot be denied—our eyes tell us—that they exist."

I smiled doubtfully, and then, for the fourth time, the strange report echoed among the boulders. This time I felt that any theory of coincidence was futile. Most starkly distinct I saw the misty presentment of a human form arise among the hillside rubble, float for appreciable seconds, and dissolve. Azim Khan coughed, triumphantly.

I dropped my switch upon my pony's withers and rode forward. No doubt there was an explanation; but it was no use attempting to extract it from my present following while they clung so resolutely to ideas with which common sense forbade sympathy.

Mannering appeared upon the walls of his fortress, waving cheerily as our little procession drew up. For ten minutes we stood exchanging answer and question like schoolboys meeting after the holidays. But from the very first I was surprised to find how exceed-



"'LOOK, SAHIB!' HE CRIED. 'LOOK WELL!'"

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ingly up-to-date his knowledge of passing events was. It was a six-days' ride from Assourah, the nearest telegraph-post, to Fort Nagar, yet I found him already primed with all the items of general intelligence which I had expected him to regard as news. In fact, he himself informed me of events which had occurred in the outside world since my start from Peshawur.

It was not till after dinner, when we had taken our cigars to the veranda, that I made any allusion to the events of the afternoon. My thoughts were turned to it by a somewhat surprising circumstance. There was a great silence over the valley below, broken only by the distant purr of the torrent, yet so faint was a click that echoed out of Mannering's office behind us that it almost escaped my attention. But my friend rose at once and left me. He returned in a minute or two, lighting a fresh cigar.

"Cambridge has won the boat-race," he remarked, with the same nonchalance that he might have used to a fellow-clubman in Pall Mall.

I bounced in my chair.

"What?" I cried. "Why, to-day—yes, to-day—is the date of the race!" He nodded.

"This afternoon," he agreed. "By five lengths."

"But—but where is your telegraph wire?" I exclaimed.

He smiled complacently as he pointed to the great flagstaff that soared above the roof.

"Have you never heard the name of Marconi?" he inquired.

A light broke over me.

"Why, of course," I answered. "I might have thought of that. You certainly are marvellously up-to-date. So you have one of his installations?"

"You are partly right and partly wrong. I have what I suppose I must call a Mannering installation. The Italian inventor and I happened to strike upon the same idea more or less simultaneously."

"Look here," said I, "as we are on the subject of mysteries, do you mind explaining those fog-signal explosions that welcomed me? They seemed to impress my body-guard mightily. Did *you* fire them?"

He nodded, still smiling.

"How?"

"By means of another of my inventions, which I was sorry to see has again been forestalled by a fellow-investigator only a few months ago."

"What is it?"

"'Armorl.'* Have you heard of it?"

I shook my head.

"Then you will in the immediate future. It is merely a method of utilizing earth currents, as Marconi uses those he sets astir in the air. So far, though, it has a more restrained radius."

"But you must at least plant your explosives?"

"Of course. And to do that—as well as for other reasons—I saw to it that my reputation for mystery should be established as soon as I arrived here. A few easy conjuring tricks, a demonstration or two with the electric battery, and I was immediately placed upon the pedestal of superstition that I desired. Now I can go where I will unattended. In fact, I doubt if one of my men—who worship me—could be got for any reward that you could mention to attend me abroad after dark. There is nothing like a notoriety for supernatural powers if you want a peaceful district about you. The threats of my wrath are sufficient to quell blood-feuds that date from past centuries."

"But why should scattered explosions here and there appear so marvellous to them?" I demurred, for by now I had returned to the conclusion that the shadowy forms I had seen wavering against the sunset could only be creations of my own imagination. Many matters take on a different complexion after a good dinner.

He grinned.

"Did you not see as well as hear?" he asked.

I hesitated.

"I saw some smoke," I said.

He rose and made off in the direction of his office.

"Come with me," he said, briefly.

I followed him into his office. Ranged along the wall I found two rows of metal rods, thrust through the boarding into the earth. Communicating with them were the wires of what looked like an electric battery. Mannering turned one of the rods in its socket and bade me look westwards through the window. I heard a click from behind me.

Instantly out of the night came the same dull report that had welcomed me that afternoon. A crimson light shone in the distant darkness, glimmered vividly against the background of the hill, and vanished. I looked at Mannering with curious eyes. For, outlined against the sudden glare, transparent but distinct, I again saw a dim presentment of a bodily form.

* The Armstrong-Orling process.

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"An amusing trick, isn't it?" said my friend.

I looked from Mannering to the row of metal rods, and back again from the rods to his impassive face. I was absolutely beaten for an explanation, and I said so.

"It is really rather simple," he replied. "You haven't had my special training, or you would understand. Come out on the veranda again."

When we had seated ourselves in our chairs he began to pull steadily at his cheroot. As soon as he had got a bright, glowing ash upon it he turned to me with a smile.

"Watch!" said he.

He sucked hard, thrust the tip of his tongue from his mouth, and lightly licked his lips. Then he sent a great solid oval of smoke swinging across the stillness of the shadow.

"That is the principle," he said. "Now look again!"

This time he twisted his lips and tongue strangely. Another lump of smoke shot out—like a rough figure of eight. He looked across at me and laughed cheerily.

"A regular schoolboy trick," he admitted. "I learned it at the engineering college. But lots of things like that turn out useful if you only wait your opportunity."

"I see that you can blow elaborate smoke-rings," I answered. "I may add that I have seen an American professor of the art do the thing considerably better," I went on, for his mysteries were growing a little raw upon my nerves. "But that is no explanation of how you bring it about here, there, and everywhere within a couple of miles or more."

"If you had been in the Navy," he replied, "you would know that middies often get magnificent smoke-ring effects by greasing the muzzle of a gun before a salute. That notion stayed by me, too."

"Then you have planted guns upon the hillside?"

"Not exactly guns. I don't mind showing you the device, if you particularly want to understand it."

He went back into the house and returned carrying half-a-dozen little wrought-iron pots. Their rims were compressed into various shapes.

"I put a pinch of blasting powder and a handful of powdered charcoal into each of these. Look at this—this little round one is the head. This oblong, set below it, is the body. These four slender tubes produce the arms and legs at exact intervals. So arises my smoke jack-in-the-box, illuminated at night by the packet of Greek fire which is exploded at the same time."

"Great heavens! what an idea!" I cried, admiringly. "Though I can't think of anyone but yourself with an imagination sufficiently diseased to have evolved it. So these crackers are planted all over the country-side to frighten the insubordinate tribesmen into obedience?"

"Precisely. I let them off intermittently, quite certain that they will have their due effect. Someone somewhere is sure to be plotting some sort of devilry, at no matter what hour of the day or night. Then my djinns upon the hillside arise to warn me; at least, that is what these Luzai have settled in their great minds."

I lay back and laughed heartily. It was so entirely like Mannering to deal in such out-of-the-way artifices, and the cool way in which he mingled fireworks with political administration touched my sense of the humorous vastly. Azim Khan, bringing coffee, eyed me with grave disapproval. I followed his train of thought. Was it decent, he was considering, that anyone should laugh in the face of his omnipotent master?

"You see," went on Mannering, "it doesn't seem to have occurred to anyone else as yet that a current can be made to flick a needle against a scrap of fulminate and cause an explosion quite as easily as it can indicate the signs of a message. I just ramble about at nights, plant an 'armorl' bar here and there, syntonize it to one of those rods you have seen in my office, connect it with one of these crackers, and any one of my twenty djinns can 'make a report' whenever I touch my battery."

"Twenty?" I repeated. "I counted two dozen rods?"

"Four of them have other uses," he said.

"What, then?"

He hesitated. Then he rose, walked forward a pace, and leaned his elbows on the parapet. I followed. He was staring down into the valley below us, which was faintly lit by the crescent moon.

"Do you observe my defences?" he asked. "They are good, but not quite impregnable as they stand."

I stared slowly round me. The cliff behind the residency was absolutely sheer into the ravine. No attack was to be feared there. On the right, too, the crags were plainly unsurmountable. On the left they were more rugged. It was conceivable, though improbable, that a trained cragsman

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might have won a way up from ledge to ledge, but the only obvious way of assault was in front. The road rose by fairly easy slants from the river, to end upon a rocky platform a few feet below the outer fringe of fortifications. It was not a naturally sloped ascent. In places it had been hewn and blasted through the solid rock. "It's a hard nut to crack," said I. "I would rather defend it than attack it any day."

"Yes," he said, slowly. "But you overlook two things. The first is the size of the fortifications. This pinnacle, though a splendid site, is too small. My forty Dogras are inconveniently crowded as it is, and the servants have to camp outside the walls. A force that could afford to waste a few lives might rush us by sheer weight of numbers."

"Perhaps," I agreed. "What is your other weakness?"



"FERISHT ALLA KHAS."

"Water," he said, simply. "We are supplied from the river two hundred feet below."

I looked down at the stream. The eddies were white in the moonlight and seemed near enough, but I realized what an immeasurable distance away they might appear if bullets were sweeping the hillside between them and the crag top. I nodded.

"I think I understand," I said. "Those four extra rods are syntonized to something rather more powerful than mere crackers. You have mined the slope?"

"With something like 200lb. of gun-cotton," he said, tersely.

"I guessed as much," said I. "Let us hope you will never have to use it. After all, the tribesmen are never likely to assault the stronghold of such a magician as yourself. The djinns and afreets of the mountain would sweep them away to destruction," I added, with a smile.

For a moment or two he was silent, staring meditatively across the void of the ravine at the ranges opposite. Then he sighed.

"As long as I pose as a magician, as you say, all is well. But——"

"But——?"

"There are always 'buts.' The 'but' in this case calls himself Ferisht Alla Khas, wears a filthy sheepskin coat over a vile yellow tunic, and is squatting in a hovel beside a notorious hill-shrine not fifteen miles away."

I laughed.

"The local mullah?" I cried. "I suppose he was the one and only necromancer before you arrived, and your tricks outshine his immeasurably. It is a case of two of a trade?"

For the second time his answer hesitated. Then he drew himself up, and turned towards me with a decisive gesture.

"Look here, Strange," he said, "I have—quite involuntarily—asked you to join me at a very critical moment. It is possible—in fact, it is likely—that you may see active service before you leave me."

I took off my terai and waved it.

"Three cheers for that!" I cried. "Don't waste apologies. But in the name of goodness—why?"

"Because," he said, slowly, "in a little cellared hiding-place in this tin-pot fort of mine is a collection of documents which one big Empire would squander a thousand men to steal, and which another big Empire would do as much to keep. Also because Ferisht Alla Khas is no more a mullah or a Mohammedan than I am. Again, because the Pulwani is the natural route for any invaders of India coming from the Pamirs."

I looked at him with a dim suspicion forming in my mind.

"Is this mullah——" I began, but he interrupted me.

"He settled hereabouts five years ago, in my predecessor's time. He began to perform

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the usual little cheap-jack miracles which impress these simple hillmen; he gained influence. He was joined from time to time by disciples who professed to be drawn by wondrous reports of his miraculous powers. He has a little colony now of a dozen of them. It is to be noted that they all came from the North."

"Then he is——"

"A Russian spy, of course," said Mannering.

I whistled. Things grew very clear, though there was one more question to be put.

"But about these documents?" I asked.

He answered my query with another.

"You heard of the Vassiloff Zoological Expedition?"

"Yes. It left Assourah only a fortnight before I did."

"Just so," said Mannering, drily. "And now Vassiloff is dead, and the whole of his collection—which had nothing to do with zoology, but contained many excellent survey and sketch maps—is hidden within thirty feet of where you stand."

"*You* didn't kill the beggar?" I asked, blankly.

"No. The whole thing was luck—the sort of luck that always attends this blundering old Empire of ours. Of course I was watching him, or certain Luzai friends of mine were. He camped beside our friend Mr. Ferisht Alla Khas for the best part of a week, and from my later investigations I think the two must have pooled their collections for Vassiloff to take home with him. Three days ago one of my men came flying hot-foot to tell me that the expedition, after leaving Ferisht's village, had been overwhelmed by an avalanche not five miles from here."

I looked at him keenly. "By accident?" I asked.

He gave the ghost of a grin.

"I didn't inquire. My fellows knew that I didn't look on Vassiloff with favour, and it is a fact that in their intertribal feuds the simple trick of dislodging an avalanche on an opposition village has been most successfully practised. But, on my word of honour, *I* had nothing to do with it. Of course, from motives of mere humanity, I and my Dogras were at the scene of the disaster within less than an hour, digging for all we were worth."

"In mere humanity," I agreed, "you could do no less."

"Ferisht and his men turned up later in a great state of excitement, to find us still digging, and continued the good work at our side. We left them still at it, having disinterred everything except, oddly enough, two mules, that had been laden with oilskin-covered baskets. There was no trace of these."

"And Ferisht has suspicions that they have found their way to Fort Nagar?"

"Yes," said Mannering, "and he means getting them."

"But why on earth haven't you sent them down to Peshawur?"

"For the very simple reason that any force that I could collect would be wiped out on the way. Ferisht controls eight hundred men. I could spare ten Dogras and enlist, perhaps, fifty Luzai irregulars. They would be murdered to a man."

"Then ask for an expedition to fetch them," I exclaimed.

"I have been dinning that request into the ears of Gresham, who has the Marconi instalment at Assourah, for the last eight-and-forty hours."

"Well?"

"It is not at all well. To begin with, I doubt if the Department entirely believe me. For political reasons they are very averse to sending any considerable body of troops this way to upset the tribes. In the third place, till the Agra manœuvres are over, which won't be for three weeks, there are no troops available for——" He broke off suddenly, rose to his feet, and stared over the parapet.

"By Jove!" he murmured.

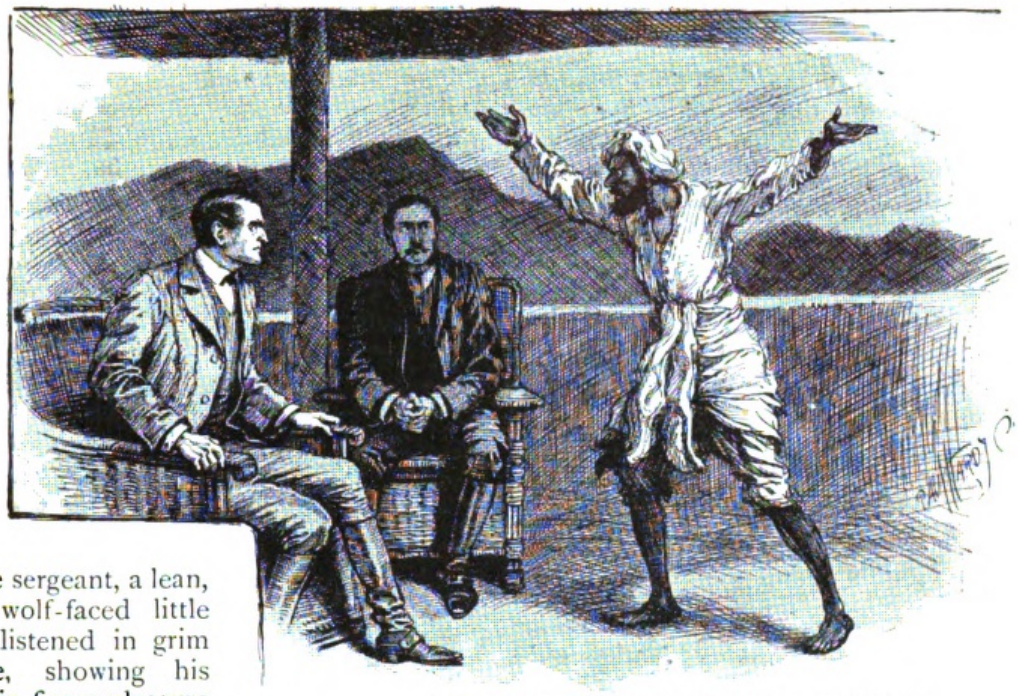
A white-clad figure was stumbling hastily up by the path through the moonlight. So noiselessly did his bare feet fall upon the pebbles that it was the sound of his laboured breathing that first made his presence known. We heard the Dogra sentry challenge. A moment later Azim Khan introduced the panting messenger on to the veranda. He made a deep obeisance.

"What is this haste?" demanded Mannering, in the Pulwani dialect.

The man rolled his eyes and waved his arms with extravagant gestures. I could not understand his jerky sentences, but Mannering followed them with close attention. I could see his eyes harden and his fingers close tensely upon the arms of his chair. As the man finished he rose and clapped his hands. Azim Khan answered the summons, to be told to see to the messenger's comfort and to summon the sergeant of the Dogras, Ullah Das.

"They are out upon us already!" said Mannering, as his under officer came hurrying in.

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"'WHAT IS THIS HASTE?' DEMANDED MANNERING."

The sergeant, a lean, wiry, wolf-faced little man, listened in grim silence, showing his teeth in fierce pleasure now and again. He saluted and left swiftly when Mannering dismissed him. I could hear his hoarse words of command a few instants later in the outer courtyard.

"Our friend who arrived in such disordered haste," said Mannering, "is a most gentlemanly cattle-lifter, whose broken arm I happened to set successfully a month or two back. He was out to-night—cattle-lifting again, I dare swear. At any rate, he was moving with such exemplary caution that he ran almost into the arms of a couple of hundred men with Ferisht Alla at their head, stealing down the gorges in this direction."

"Then he is going to attempt a surprise?"

"Evidently. But what is especially annoying is the fact that he has apparently won over some of my own Luzai to join him by proclaiming that he is waging a jehad—a holy war—against my infidel arts. He has called upon them as true believers to aid him against the giaour."

"What are you going to do?"

"The first and most obvious thing is to get in water. I have sent every coolie in the place down to the river with casks and cans——"

A shot rang out from the valley, followed quickly by half-a-dozen more. We could see the red flashes flare across the night. There was an answering volley from immediately below us, the faint sound of a yell or two, and then a great clattering of tin.

"Good Lord!" said Mannering, anxiously. "I don't like the empty sound of those cans."

Two score camp-followers, escorted by a reluctant Dogra guard, came flying up the path to report that they had found the river-bank already held in strength. They thumped their empty tins resoundingly to give emphasis to the explanation that they had got no water—not a drop.

Even as they spoke a bullet thudded into our midst against a coolie's chest. The man flung up his arms, spun round, and fell dead across my feet. A dozen more reports produced as many white splinter marks on the veranda roofing. The servants scurried to shelter like so many rabbits, while we and our fighting men settled down behind the parapet for the defence in earnest.

Before an hour was over we recognised that the attack was wanting in enthusiasm. If the false mullah wanted to annihilate us in one first desperate onset he was wofully disappointed in his men. Their fighting fervour was at a low ebb. They crouched and skipped among the boulders at the hill-foot; they yelled insults; they fluttered ragged skirts derisively in the moonlight, but not one of them attempted to leave the cover of the stones for the last hundred bare yards of hillside that lay between them and the platform outside the parapet gate.

They pelted their bullets at us from their long jezails. Here and there the sharper crack of some stolen or smuggled rifle was heard. Uproar was with us ceaselessly, and as the moon sank nearer the hills our anxiety grew. But even with the lessening light the

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peril was no more acute, and as the hours passed, and gradually the faint illumination of the stars gave place to the pale birth of dawn, we realized that an assault in the darkness was beyond the courage of Ferisht Alla's men. The terrors of Mannering Sahib, the magician, were not to be dared in the djinn-haunted night.

We on our side wasted little ammunition, and after the first anxiety grew dull our leader left us to sit anxiously in his office, vainly endeavouring to get into communication with Assourah, where no doubt Gresham, his correspondent, was healthily asleep.

It was as the first vivid rays of the sun shot out upon the summit of Mount Thanipura opposite that the long wait came to an end. Ullah Das, crouching at my elbow, was peering like myself across the bastion with his rifle cocked. Suddenly he rose to his feet, scarcely took time to aim, and fired. A yellow-clad figure leaped into the air and sprawled back upon the boulders. Ullah Das grunted contentedly.

"A fool and the son of a fool, sahib!" he ejaculated. "His brainless poll was exposed!"

A yell of rage went up from the besiegers. A dozen wrathful faces glared from above as many rocks and brown fists were furiously shaken. Two of the more reckless paid for their temerity as a volley from the lower parapet rang out; yet, to my ears, there seemed something of exultation rather than of defeat in the defiant roar that followed.

My instinct had been right. Suddenly Ullah Das leaped to his feet again, brought up his rifle, and began to empty his magazine towards the left side of the rock platform at the road head. He shouted to his men below. Then I saw where our peril lay.

In twos and threes, looking like a long line of ants as they followed one another, a horde of hillmen was pouring over the topmost ledge of the precipitous ascent, scrambling to their feet, and racing for shelter beneath the outer wall of the fort. A good percentage fell beneath the Dogra fire, but this slackened swiftly and with good cause. Thrusting the muzzles of their jezails through the loopholes of the outer parapet the besiegers covered all who stood upon their feet within. We could no longer direct a fusillade upon the bare slope below without exposing ourselves as easy marks to their fire. With a howl of delight the main body of the enemy rose from their hiding-places and came sweeping up to join their comrades in the hard-won position above. I gave a shout. Mannering came out of his office in two strides, took in the situation in one comprehensive glance, and then stuffed a corner of his handkerchief into a rifle-muzzle and waved it above his head!

I clutched at him in my amazement.

"Good heavens! you don't mean a surrender?" I yelled.

He shook his head impatiently.

"My God!—no!" he answered. "It is for their own sakes that I am going to parley with them—there are scores of my own villagers among them, carried away by that Russian devil's tongue. I must save them if I can!"

He raised his voice into a shout.

"Ferisht Alla Khas! A word with you!"

There had been a hoarse roar of triumph as the soiled white flag was waved. Then a hush fell as a tall figure stepped out into the open and motioned his followers to silence.

"Here am I, sahib!" cried the man, in an accent that even my untutored ears could tell was faltering Luzai.

"Draw off your men, renegade!" commanded Mannering. "Draw off these fools that you have lashed to madness before my vengeance falls!"

The man laughed, sneeringly.

"Does the panther flee the trapped or wounded deer?" he asked. "Why has not the vengeance of the sahib fallen in these last midnight hours?"

Mannering made a gesture towards the hills.

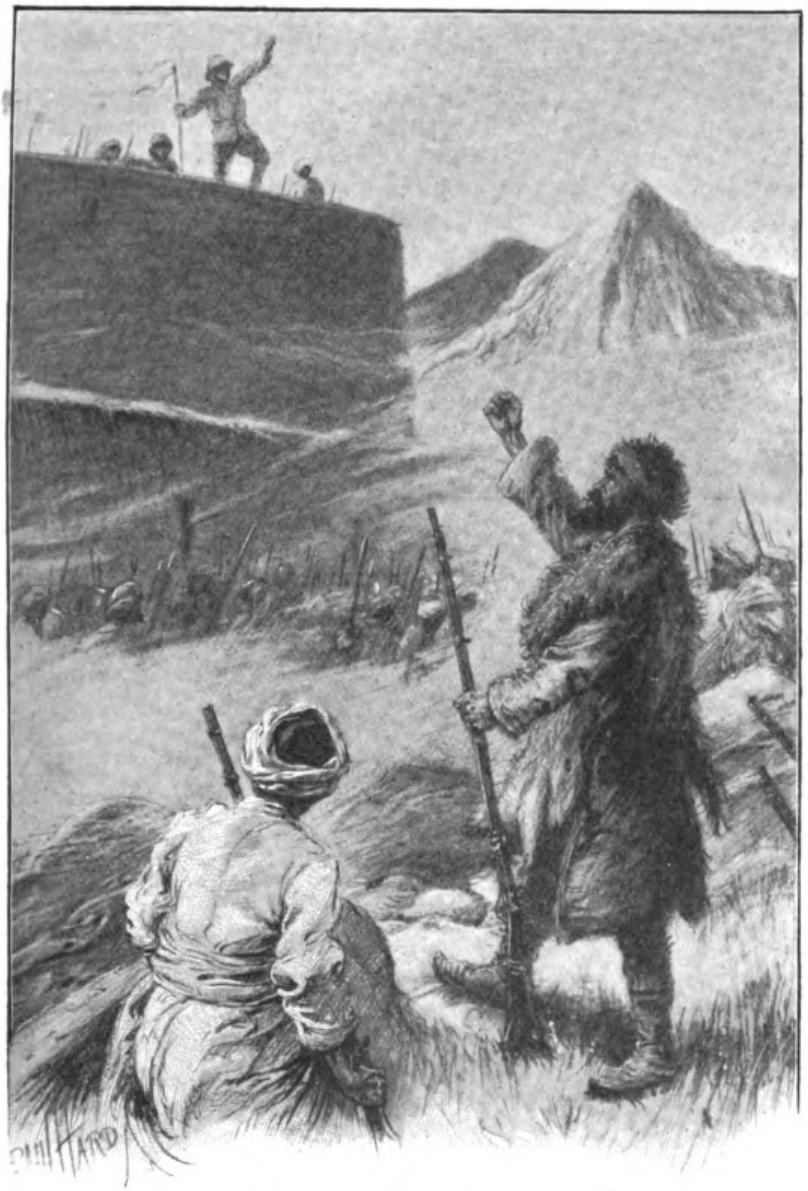
"In my mercy I have stayed my hand," he said. "Will you have a sign from me? Watch!"

I was suddenly aware that he had left my side. I heard the familiar click from the office behind me. Two reports followed each other from the opposite crest. The atmosphere of the dawning was so stagnant still that the two smoke figures that rose into view hovered appreciable minutes before they dissolved, and hesitating murmurs broke out in the ranks below us.

Half-a-dozen hillmen threw down their weapons and covered their eyes. Comrade yelled to comrade that it was ill work to fight against Mannering Sahib and the trained servants of devildom, and not a few began to sidle furtively down the hillside. But Ferisht Alla was equal to the occasion. He leaped to the head of his men.

"Forward upon this hireling of the Pit! Forward!" he cried. "By God's Holy Prophet I swear that His protections shall be about you if you destroy the dealers in

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"FERISHT ALLA KHAS! A WORD WITH YOU!"

accursed arts! Follow me and kill!—kill!"

Mannering raised himself to his full height and vainly endeavoured to gain a second hearing. Ferisht Alla denied it him, ignoring the white flag that still fluttered above our heads. He threw up his jezail and fired. Mannering clutched his arm, staggering. I sprang to catch him.

"It is nothing—nothing!" he shouted, and waved me impatiently aside. Gathering himself together, he lurched back into the building. At the same moment the whole mob of maddened caterans made a rush for the walls.

I caught up my rifle to sell my life as dearly as might be, and began to empty the magazine into the brown turmoil of the charge.

And then, in the twinkling of an eye, the whole foreground was blotted out. With a thunderous roar the earth shook, the rocks dissolved, the red soil, the boulders, the tangled tumult of ravening men disappeared into nothing more substantial than a swirling cloud of dust—a cloud through which sickening fragments rained that even the stolid Dogras shuddered to look upon! Two hundred men had been blown out of the very semblance of humanity more swiftly than the autumn gust flicks the leaves from its path!

An hour later Mannering, his arm bandaged, his face pale to the lips, was wandering with me through the massed horrors before the walls. He halted before a body less dismembered than most. I looked down upon the sheepskin-clad figure with dawning recognition. It was the coat worn by the leader of the attack.

"His blood be on his own head!" said Mannering, solemnly. "I gave him his chance!"

The body lay face downwards. A morbid impulse made me turn the shattered features to the sun. Disfigured though they were, they were recognisable. It was Ferisht Alla himself. His yellow tunic was open at the breast and a silver chain shone round his throat. It held a tiny pendant—an image roughly wrought in bronze. Mannering pointed at it as I held it up into the light.

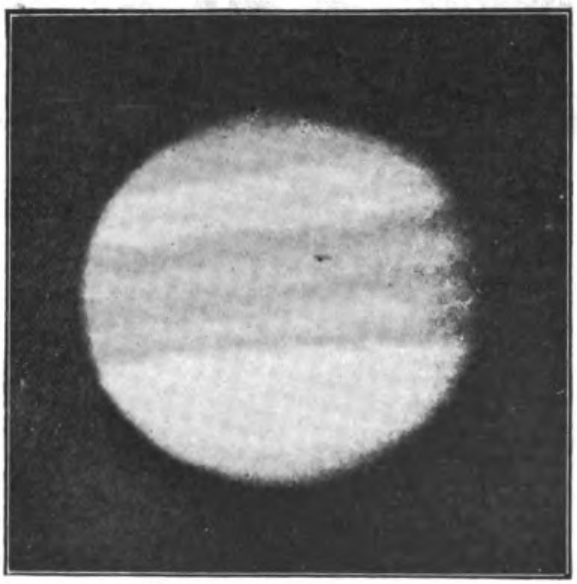
"There is proof enough, if you want it, of what the man was," said he. "Do true mullahs, faithful sons of Islam, wear idols? It is an eikon, and worn by a devout servant of the Orthodox Russian Church!"

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Jupiter and His System.

By Sir Robert Ball.

THE eight important planets which revolve around the sun, deriving therefrom their supplies of light and heat, are naturally divided into two groups of four each. The first of these groups is composed of the planets nearest the sun, while the second group consists of the four outer planets. But the distinction between the two divisions into which the planets are thus separated is of much more significance than would be implied merely by the fact that the one group consisted of bodies which are closer to the sun than are those of the other group. It is remarkable that the four interior planets are comparatively small bodies, while the four outer planets are very large bodies. The physical differences in other respects between the group formed by Mercury, Venus, the Earth, and Mars, and the group formed by Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus, and Neptune, are also significant. Not only are these latter bodies much more huge than the former, but their structure is essentially different.



PHOTOGRAPH OF THE PLANET JUPITER.

The four inner planets are objects which, for our present purpose, may be regarded as typified by the earth. They appear to be to a great extent solid globes, the total mass of each atmosphere being quite inconsiderable in comparison with the great mass of the globe which it surrounds. But the four outer planets are evidently bodies very different from the earth in their physical nature. They cannot be regarded as solid globes covered with an atmosphere whose total amount is insignificant relatively to the solid globe within. These outer giant planets have atmospheres which certainly form a very large part of the entire orb. Indeed, it may well be doubted whether any portions whatever of the giant planets are to be regarded as solid in the same sense in which we think of the earth as a solid body.

Of these four outer planets there is one which is specially accessible to our observations. Jupiter is greater than either Saturn, Uranus, or Neptune, and therefore on that account alone it would obviously be easier to observe Jupiter than any of the other three, even if they all had been at equal distances from us. Jupiter is indeed so vast that if the other planets of our system had all been rolled together into one their united volume would not be so great as is that of Jupiter. But Jupiter also happens to be much nearer to the earth than are any of the other great planets. It therefore follows, for a double reason, that this vast globe offers to the terrestrial astronomer a surpassingly interesting object whose details he can examine under exceptional advantages.

We may first put down some numerical facts with regard to the dimensions of this splendid globe and the track in which it moves. Like all the other planets, Jupiter, of course, revolves in an elliptic path around the central luminary. The average distance of the great planet from the sun is 482,000,000 miles. The course which he follows is, therefore, rather more than five times as great in diameter as is the path pursued by the earth. The elliptic track of Jupiter, however, departs appreciably from the circular form, inasmuch as we sometimes find the distance of the planet from the sun to be as great as 5·45, and sometimes as little as 4·95, if in each case we take the average distance from the earth to the sun as the unit.

The most favourable circumstances for observing the planet will be found when the earth lies directly between the sun and Jupiter, while at the same time the earth is at its greatest possible distance and Jupiter at its least possible distance from the sun. But even on the rare occasions when these conditions are fulfilled Jupiter must still be nearly four times as far from the earth as the earth is from the sun.

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It is a rule in the celestial movements that the more distant is the track of a planet from the sun, the slower is the pace at which the orb moves forward on its mighty journey. The earth has to hurry on at the rate of eighteen miles a second in order to accomplish its journey round the sun within the allotted year. But Jupiter, though it has a much longer circuit to accomplish, is much more leisurely in its procedure. The great planet, in fact, moves only eight miles in each second. This no doubt seems a very high speed when measured by our ordinary standards of velocity, such as those possessed by express trains or rifle bullets. There is, however, another way of judging of the speed of a planet which is perhaps more appropriate to the case than any comparison with the movements of relatively small objects like railway trains or rifle bullets. Let us think of the time that Jupiter would require to move through the length of his own diameter. The equatorial diameter of the planet is 87,500 miles, being about eleven times that of the earth. As Jupiter moves eight miles per second, or about 480 miles a minute, it is easy to see that the planet requires a period of not less than three hours to move through a distance equal to its own diameter. Looked at in this way the speed of Jupiter seems slow enough. We should not consider a missile to be moving quickly which required three hours to advance through a distance equal to its own length.

One of the most remarkable features connected with the great planet is the abnormally high speed at which he rotates around his axis. Notwithstanding the huge bulk of Jupiter we find that he requires much less time to accomplish a revolution than does the earth. For while our globe takes about twenty-four hours to complete each turn, we see that Jupiter goes round in less than half the same time. Indeed, the period of rotation of the great planet is not more than 9hrs. 55½min. With this rapid spin about his axis another remarkable feature of the planet is connected.

It is obvious to anyone who looks at Jupiter through a good telescope that the form of the planet is not circular. The great orb is bulged out at the Equator and it is flattened at the poles. The figure of the earth, it will be remembered, manifests a feature of the same kind. But the departure from the circular outline is much more pronounced in the great planet than in our own earth. This certainly depends upon the high speed at which Jupiter revolves. The planet, not being made of solid materials, but rather of substances which for the present we may speak of as pliant, gradually yields to the centrifugal action connected with its rapid rotation. The equatorial regions are consequently bulged out, and thus the characteristic form of Jupiter finds its explanation.

The most noteworthy feature of Jupiter, as well as of each of the other exterior planets, is the apparently gaseous character which they exhibit. In this respect they are sharply contrasted with the robust globes of which our earth is the type. This point is so fundamental that unless it be understood the actual appearance of the great planet will hardly be intelligible.

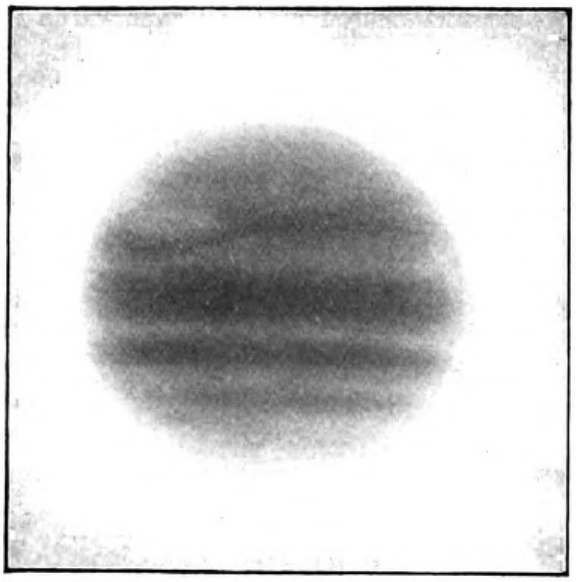
Among the most remarkable achievements of astronomers an important place must be assigned to their discovery of the weights of the planets. At first it might seem a problem of almost insuperable difficulty to ascertain the tons, or rather the myriads of tons, of matter in a globe situated at such a distance from the earth as is the planet Jupiter. But the fact is that such a problem can be solved with all needful accuracy. We now know the mass of the planet Jupiter certainly to within the hundredth part, and probably to within the thousandth of its total amount. It seems useless for our purpose to express this weight in billions of tons; it will suffice if we compare the weight of Jupiter with the weight of the earth. The result is that we find Jupiter weighs as much as 310 bodies would do if each of them had the same mass as the earth.

But though, no doubt, this illustrates in an impressive manner the great mass of the biggest planet of our system, yet from other points of view it seems a matter of surprise that the mass of Jupiter should not have turned out to be even greater than is thus indicated. For knowing the average diameter of Jupiter, as well as that of the earth, it can be shown by a little calculation that, so far as bulk is concerned, no fewer than 1,230 globes, each as large as the earth, should be rolled together into one to form a single globe as big as Jupiter. Here, then, we find a remarkable contrast between the great planet and our earth. If the two globes had been composed in the same manner and of like materials, then as Jupiter was 1,230 times as large as our earth it would be necessary that it should have been also 1,230 times as heavy. It would be obvious, for instance, that if of two

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globes of cast-iron one was 1,230 times as large as another, then the weights of the two globes would also be in the same proportion. But what we actually find is that, though Jupiter is 1,230 times as big as the earth, yet he is only 310 times as heavy. It is thus plain that the great planet possesses only a quarter of the weight that it would have been entitled to if it had been made of materials of the same kind and in the same physical condition as the materials of which the earth is made. This is an instructive result, inasmuch as it shows us plainly that Jupiter must be a globe of a totally different nature from this earth on which we dwell.

At first it might be supposed that the great planet was built out of some materials not known to us on this earth, and whose density was much below that of the actual elements out of which our earth has been formed. But it has been the triumph of modern science to have demonstrated by the help of the spectroscope that the elementary substances of which the sun and even the stars are constituted are essentially the same as the substances of which our earth is composed. This being admitted, we are now very close to the explanation of the remarkable disparity between the bulk of the giant planet and its weight. There cannot be the least doubt that Jupiter is very much hotter than the earth. It must be understood that in this statement I am not referring to the heat derived from the sun. In so far as that is concerned, Jupiter receives much less heat than the earth, so that if we were only considering sun heat we should find that Jupiter was much colder than the earth. It can, indeed, be shown that the share of sunbeams which arrive at such a distance as that at which Jupiter is placed is only about the twenty-fifth part of the share of sunbeams which we enjoy. The heat of Jupiter to which I now refer is of quite a different kind. It is what is known as internal heat.



JUPITER.

From a Photo. lent by Professor Holden, formerly of the Lick Observatory.

We believe that the interior of the earth is very hot, hotter, indeed, than molten iron, though the temperature of the surface of our globe is now but little influenced by the internal heat. On the other hand, the sun is not only extremely hot in the interior, but the outer regions of the great luminary are obviously in a state of fierce incandescence. Let us imagine the condition of a globe somewhat intermediate in condition between the earth and the sun. Let us suppose it hot enough at the surface to transform any water into steam, though not hot enough to make solid matter glow with any visible light as a sun-like body. In this way we might produce a globe which would apparently possess the same physical character as Jupiter. In such a body the quantity of matter in the vaporous form would swell the bulk of the globe in comparison with that of a colder globe which might contain quite as large an amount of actual material. In this consideration we can no doubt find the reason why Jupiter, though only 310 times as heavy as the earth, is certainly 1,230 times as large. Jupiter has certainly very much more internal heat than our globe. The outer parts of the great planet consist of layers of dense vapour thousands of miles in thickness, which have increased the bulk of Jupiter enormously without adding to his weight in anything like the same proportion.

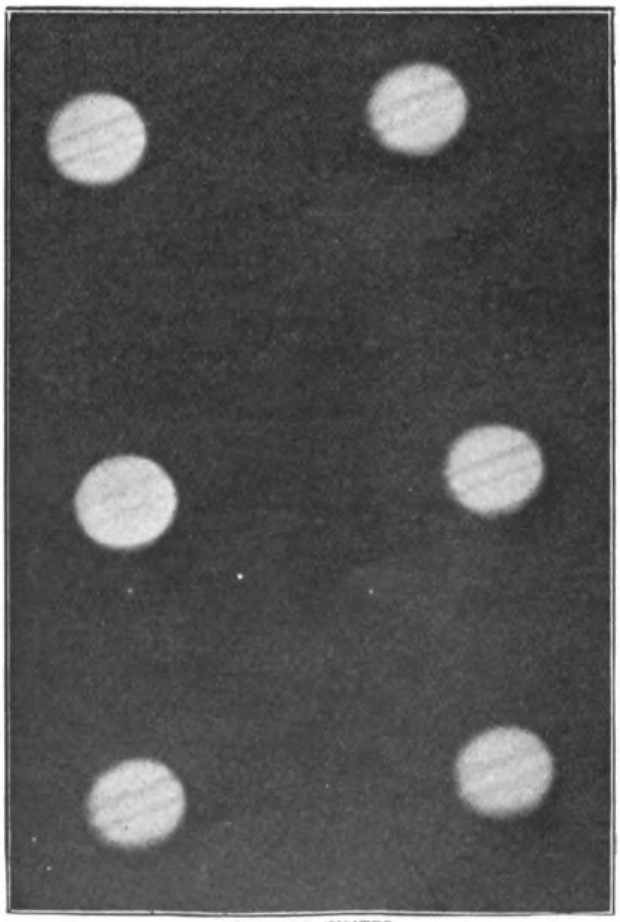
These considerations will explain the peculiar aspect which Jupiter presents to the observer. It is obvious that in the great planet the astronomer finds before him an object of a widely different character from the earth on which he stands, or from such bodies as the moon and the planet Mars. The telescope shows the features on these objects to be of a permanent character. The craters and mountains on the moon are evidently solid, and time reveals little or no change in them. It is perhaps not quite so true to say that the features of Mars are permanent. But the fact that charts of Mars have been prepared and that the leading

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objects thereon can always be recognised shows us that this planet is to be regarded in many essential respects as a solid body like our earth. A map of Jupiter depicts, however, a very different scene. With the exception to be presently noted we do not find on the great planet any permanent feature. Marks of various kinds there are, no doubt. But most of these have but little more permanence than is possessed by the clouds on our own sky. The marks by which Jupiter's surface is diversified are but little more than our views of the clouds which so thickly surround him. No doubt an observer in the depths of space who was endeavouring to survey our earth would find at all times that a large part of the surface of our globe was effectually hidden from his scrutiny by clouds. But we must suppose that with due patience he would be able to seize a moment when each tract that he desired to inspect was free from cloud, so that by careful watching he would doubtless succeed in the lapse of time in obtaining some fair notion of the geographical conditions of our globe. But the clouds on Jupiter are so much more dense than the clouds which encompass our earth that we are never able to obtain any view of what Jupiter below its clouds may be like.

There are objects on Jupiter which, though hardly to be described as permanent features of the planet, yet still subsist sufficiently long to enable them to be observed for months, or, in at least one case, for years. Let us suppose that the attention of the astronomer has been concentrated on some mark of this kind which possesses the necessary qualities of sharpness and definiteness to admit of accurate observation. The chosen point is watched as it seems to move across the planet, or, rather, is turned around the globe in consequence of the planet's rotation. After the object has made its first appearance at one edge of the planet, a period of five hours will suffice to convey it across the visible disc and to allow it to disappear by retreating to the other side. For another period of five hours the selected mark will be upon that side of the planet which is averted from the observer, and therefore, of course, it will not be seen. In due time it will, however, make its reappearance at the visible side of Jupiter and will again move across the disc, only to disappear when the margin is again reached. Time after time this observation may be repeated, and at last, after some hundreds of revolutions have been accomplished, the period required for the planet to make one complete turn about its axis is determined with all desirable accuracy.

There are several marks on the great globe which are available for this purpose, and thus we have what might seem at first many different methods of discovering the exact period which the globe requires for one revolution. Of course, if these different marks had all been engraved upon a solid object and were permanent features on that object, then the period of rotation as determined by any one mark could not be different from that determined by any other mark. Judge, therefore, of the surprise with which astronomers found that the period of the planet Jupiter as determined by some of these marks differed from that which was indicated by others.

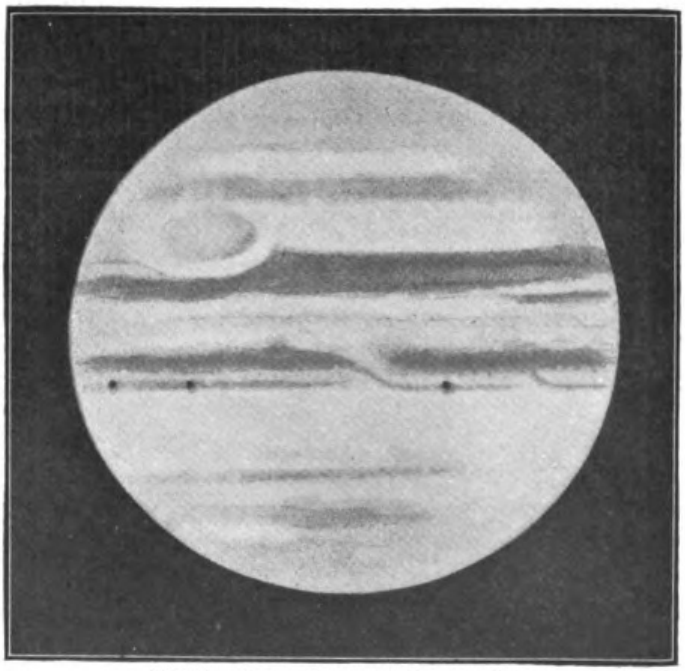


VIEWS OF JUPITER.
From a Photo. lent by Professor Holden, formerly of the Lick Observatory.

We are indebted to many careful observers for having contributed to this curious result; but I may specially acknowledge the very interesting discussion of the subject which has been given by Mr. Stanley Williams.

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He has shown that we can divide the whole surface of the planet, both northern hemisphere and southern, into zones, characterized by the different periods which are indicated by the marks they contain. If we were to judge of the period of the planet's rotation by the spots near the Equator, it would seem to rotate in 9hrs. 50min. 20sec. If, however, we take zones at some distance from the Equator, north or south, the period indicated would be about five minutes longer. To this statement there is, however, one very remarkable exception. There is a zone in the northern hemisphere where the marks, instead of requiring a longer time than suffices for a rotation at the Equator, accomplish their journey in a shorter time, the period being about a minute and a half less. The explanation of these several varieties in the periods as indicated by different spots is indeed a remarkable one. It proves that besides the general movement of the planet as a whole there must be special currents in the different zones parallel to the Equator. A mark which we observe is thus not alone carried round by the general motion which belongs to the planet as a whole, but it is also affected by the particular current circling round the planet in that zone in which the mark lies. It would thus seem that round the Equator of Jupiter a current hurries onwards in the direction in which the planet is itself moving, and that owing to this current any object associated with it will be so swept along that it completes a revolution round the planet in five minutes less than the spots would do which lie in the temperate latitudes north and south. As already intimated, however, the movement in the zone which lies between 20deg. and 24deg. north latitude is even more rapid than in the equatorial current, and therefore, of course, much more rapid than in the zones which lie adjoining it to the north and south. These currents of gaseous or vaporous material on the great planet open up questions of much interest for future investigation.



JUPITER—SHOWING THE GREAT RED SPOT.
Drawn by Professor Barnard at the Lick Observatory.

The most remarkable feature of the great planet during recent times has undoubtedly been the great red spot which is the one mark on Jupiter that may be said to possess some permanence. We are specially indebted to that assiduous astronomer, Mr. Denning, for having brought together the various facts relative to this remarkable object. It would seem that attention was first specially directed to a notable reddish mark on Jupiter in 1878, and from that time to the present it has been constantly present on the great globe, though its hue, as well as its distinctness, has varied from time to time. One of the most enigmatical circumstances connected with the great red spot is that its period of rotation has perceptibly lengthened. In 1879 the period was 9hrs. 55min. 34·2sec., while at the present time the period is certainly six seconds longer. It is difficult to understand this change if, as has been supposed, this particular object was some portion of the more solid interior of the planet which protruded itself into visibility through the surrounding layers of atmosphere. Mr. Williams, in calling attention to the fact that the surrounding matter on the planet moves faster than the red spot, speaks of the latter as an "island" protruding through the current, which rushes to it and round it at the rate of about sixteen miles an hour.

The beautiful system of moons of which Jupiter is the centre is connected in a remarkable manner with the history of astronomy. The four well-known satellites lie just on the confine which divides objects which are visible to the unaided eye from objects which require telescopic assistance to

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render them visible. The discovery of the satellites of Jupiter was one of the earliest fruits of Galileo's newly-invented telescope. The possessor of even the smallest telescope can derive much pleasure from repeating Galileo's famous observation and watching the exquisite system of four moons. Their movements and changes are so rapid that the relative positions of Jupiter and his attendants offer endless variety. The innermost of the four satellites makes a complete circuit round Jupiter in less than two days, while even the outer of the four does not require quite so much as seventeen days. We thus see that the periods in which these lunar attendants of Jupiter complete each of their revolutions are much less than the period required by our own satellite for its leisurely performance. The distance of our moon from the earth's centre is not quite so great as the distance from the centre of Jupiter to the nearest of his moons. The notable fact that Jupiter's first satellite can accomplish in less than a couple of days a journey round an orbit actually greater than that which the moon requires a month for completing is due, of course, to the vast mass of Jupiter. The greater the mass of the planet the more rapidly does a satellite revolve if the distances in each case be the same. Indeed, it is by the circumstances of the satellite's motion that we have the means of discovering the mass of the planet.

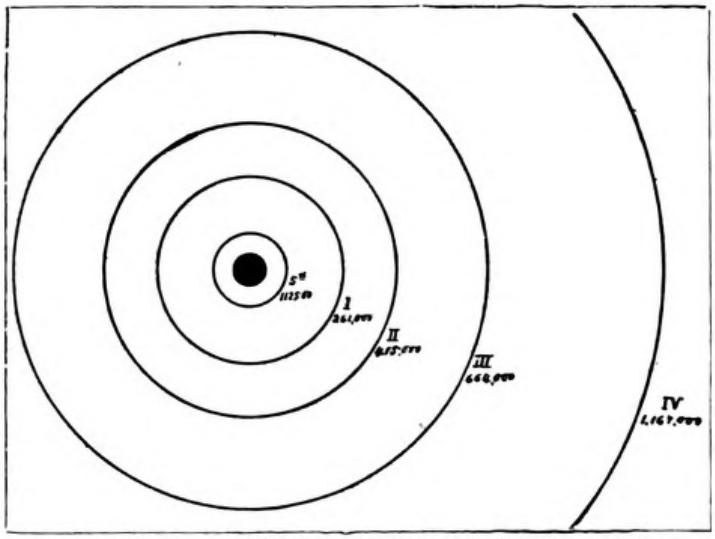
Features which make the satellites of Jupiter of special interest to the observer are found in their eclipses. Indeed, the first satellite has to submit to an eclipse at every revolution. The frequently recurring disappearances of a satellite by its plunge into the shadow of Jupiter, followed in due course by its emergence, afford most interesting material for the student of the heavens. The careful observer will also frequently be gratified by noting the transit of the satellite across the surface of the planet, and upon this same background the shadow of the satellite will be seen as a sharply-marked deep black spot. As to the sizes of these four companions to Jupiter, the first proceeding outwards from the planet is about the same size as the moon. The other three satellites are all larger, the third being the greatest of all.

Owing to the remoteness of the satellites, it can hardly be expected that we shall ever be able to learn much with regard to their actual character as physical globes. We are, however, indebted to Professor E. E. Barnard for an interesting observation which has certainly brought to light some details with regard to the structure of the innermost of these objects. We have the more satisfaction in mentioning this as it may be taken as an illustration of one of the most delicate telescopic observations made by a consummate observer. On November 19th, 1893, the transit of the first satellite over the face of the planet was observed with the great telescope of the Lick Observatory, and a photograph then taken showed both the satellite and its shadow, a portion of the latter being hidden behind the satellite. In intervals of specially "fine seeing" the globe of the satellite stood out distinctly in a circular form, and it was then perceived that "this little attendant" on Jupiter has distinct polar caps that are dusky like those of Jupiter and that it has a bright equatorial belt, as bright as the brightest portion of Jupiter's surface. The conclusion is at once suggested that the satellite also rotates on an axis nearly perpendicular to its orbit, as Jupiter itself does.

We are indebted to the same skilful astronomer, using the same superb refractor of thirty-six inches aperture, for one of the most interesting discoveries which have been made during the century in adding to the known members of the solar system.

On September 9th, 1892, Professor Barnard was engaged in a careful study of the environs of Jupiter with the great equatorial of the Lick Observatory. He perceived on this occasion a very small star-like object which, as he says, must certainly have been as faint as a star of the thirteenth magnitude, and probably much less. Of course, it might have been quite possible that the star-like object was really a star, in which case it would be only one of the unnumbered host of minute points which, though they may and doubtless do possess much intrinsic interest, are still so entirely beyond our range that we are obliged to pass them without special notice. But Professor Barnard thought that this star-like point might really be an attendant of the great planet, and accordingly he submitted it to a careful scrutiny. Let us first of all see how the satellite, if such it should really prove, might be discriminated from a star. Its appearance would afford no reliable indication. It would be utterly beyond the capability of even the great Lick equatorial itself to pronounce from the appearance of the little object whether it was, indeed, a satellite to the planet or a star. In the former case it would merely be an

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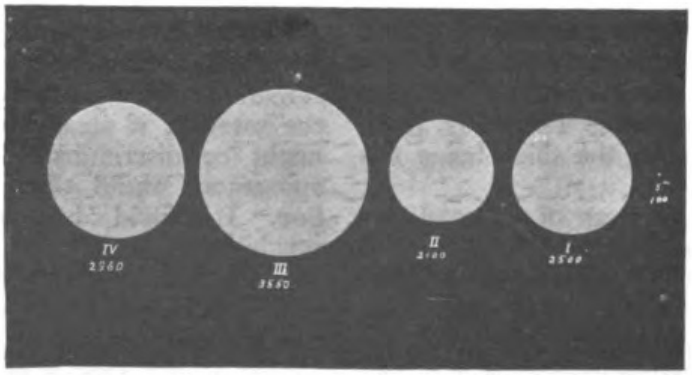


THE RELATIVE SIZES OF THE ORBITS OF JUPITER'S FIVE MOONS.

object rendered visible by the sunlight which falls upon it. In the latter case it would be itself a sun, only, perhaps, a hundred thousand or a million times as far off as Jupiter. But this difference in physical constitution, profound though it be, could not be detected by the telescope in so far as mere appearance is concerned. The test which Professor Barnard applied depended on the movements of the body. This may need a few words of explanation, as it so happens that in the present case the matter is a little complicated.

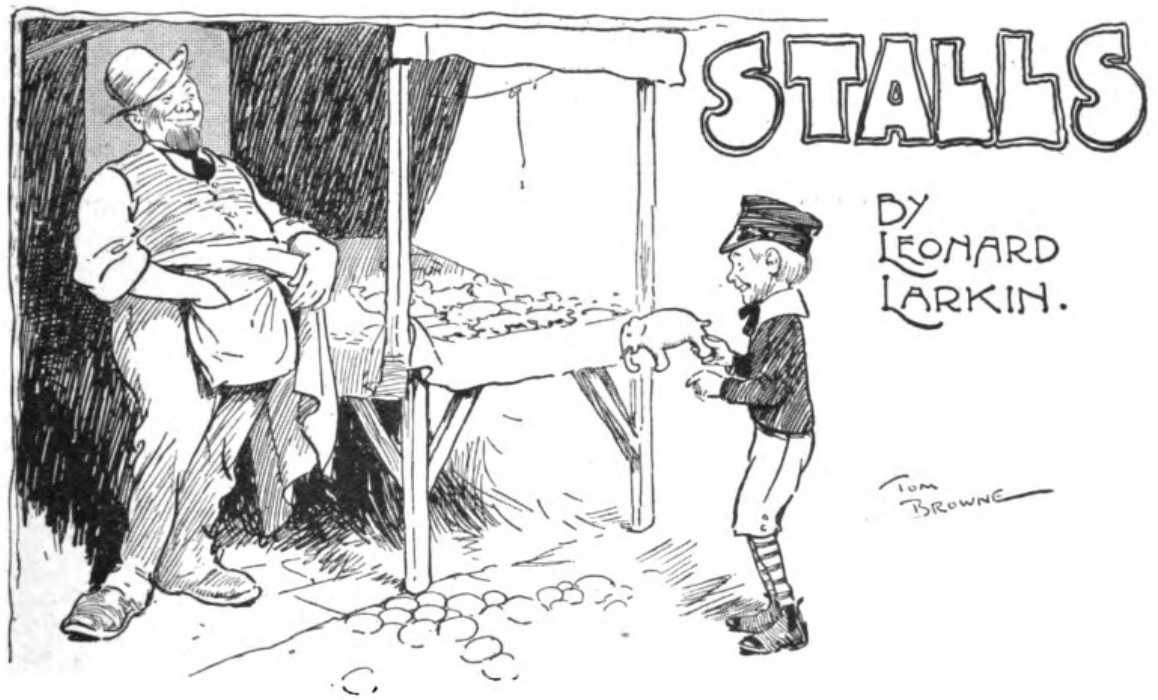
The most obvious method of proving that the older satellites of Jupiter are not stars is derived from the fact that they accompany Jupiter in his great orbital movement. In addition to this grand progress which they share in common with the great planet they also perform their revolutions around him. The satellites and the stars in the background are thus sharply contrasted by the circumstance that the satellites advance night after night with the planet, so that though their situations, relative to each other and to the great globe, may be continually altering, yet they always remain in his vicinity. The stars, on the other hand, are, of course, left behind as the planet sweeps on night after night, bearing along the system of satellites. It was, therefore, by the movements of the little object that Professor Barnard essayed to discover its real character. With the help of a certain appliance possessed by every good telescope it was possible to measure carefully the distance from the star-like point to the adjacent edge of the great planet. This distance would no doubt change whether the little object were a star or whether it were a satellite. The character of the changes would, however, be widely different in the two cases. Had the point been a star it would have been left behind altogether in a few hours, while if it were a satellite it would certainly advance with Jupiter, though with an independent motion of its own around the planet. It was soon seen that the latter was indeed the case. Professor Barnard was so fortunate as to observe the new object on three consecutive nights—namely, the 9th, 10th, and 11th of September, 1892. Several times on each night the relative positions were carefully measured. The movements of the little body were found to be so rapid that the alterations in its place were quite perceptible in measurements made at intervals not exceeding a few minutes. The accumulated observations speedily cleared away certain doubtful points that had at first arisen, and the existence of this new companion to Jupiter had been established as one of the leading telescopic discoveries of the century.

This fifth satellite is so minute that, just as the four older satellites lie within the reach of the most ordinary telescopes, so this last object demands the utmost power of the very best instrument. Indeed, it may be said that, if one of the older satellites were to be crushed into a thousand equal fragments, any one of those fragments would be larger than the fifth satellite of Jupiter. The grandest object on the planetary system is thus attended not only by that superb retinue of four older moons, so worthy of the dignity of the great orb, but also by a page of appropriately minute dimensions.



THE SIZES OF JUPITER'S FIVE MOONS.

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WE have some wonderful words in the English language, and the word "stall" is one of them. When we are told, as I have been told, that a Chinese sign may mean a dozen different words, according to the context, and a Chinese word, or sound, may be written by a dozen (or twenty, or forty) different signs, according to all sorts of things, then we laugh at the outlandishness of it all, and wonder how in the world the unhappy heathens understand each other. We laugh because we forget, for the moment, the ancient anecdote of the Frenchman who complained of a cow in his box—which any intelligent medical practitioner should have instantly understood as a cough in the chest—and the other anecdote, just as old, of the other Frenchman (or the same—it doesn't matter) who was amazed to discover that a Christmas-box wasn't a box at all, but a half-crown, and who, being told that somebody had given another a box on the ear, examined the ear very carefully, but couldn't find the box. That same Frenchman—or say a Chinaman, if you like, for the sake of variety—could never guess what this article was about from the title. The respected reader, true-born Englishman as he may be, has perhaps expected information on the stalls in a theatre; but he should remember that THE STRAND MAGAZINE is not a theatrical publication. Perhaps he thought to learn something about the stalls in a stable, or even the headstall that a horse wears, because he forgot that this is not a sporting periodical. He may even have anticipated something about the prebendal stalls in a cathedral, though he really ought to know that this is not an ecclesiastical journal. And if he expects to read about the person called a "stall" who screens a pickpocket in business hours—well, really now, has he any right to consider this a thieves' journal?

No doubt a good deal might be written about all these sorts of stalls, if some other fellow did it. Personally, I don't understand much about them. And speaking of not understanding stalls, what is a stalled ox, exactly? That is a thing I understand less than all the stalls together. But this by the way. The sort of stalls I know something about stand on trestles or wheels, and the

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sort of things that stand on the stalls are numberless. There are some things, however, that used to stand on stalls in the days of my youth that I can no longer find there. Gingerbread, for instance. I don't think you can buy gingerbread anywhere now, and the last time I saw it in a shop, some years ago, it was in the most uninteresting rectangular shape possible, and wholly lacking the gilt that once gave it so aristocratic an appearance. On the old gingerbread stall you could buy a pig, a donkey, a tiger, a man, an elephant—all made of gingerbread and all beautifully gilt, and the elephant with two lucifer matches for tusks; and it was wonderful to observe the varied flavours that the gingerbread derived from the different shapes—not to mention the matches. I positively assert that I could imagine a distinct taste of crackling in the pig if I shut my eyes very tight; and as to the tiger and the elephant, there was never such a flavour of hunting in the jungle and grilling the quarry at a camp fire as I could get out of them—again with my eyes shut very tight. After which confession it will not surprise you to learn that I always ate the man and the donkey with my eyes wide open.

Mem. of sudden recollection: all their eyes were made of caraway comfits—a stony little pebble of a sweetmeat with a seed in it. It was not until I learned to spell that I got rid of the notion that they somehow derived their name from carrying away my comfort by breaking my teeth.

But I sadly miss the gingerbread stall, and the prosperous-looking man with the money-bag under his white apron who kept it. Surely *all* the gingerbread stall-keepers can't have made their fortunes? Here's an offer to stimulate enterprise. I'll buy five shillingsworth of the first gilt gingerbread I see on a stall, and eat the lot—barring the caraway comfits and the lucifer matches, which I will return to the stall-keeper as a bonus.

I think I must have bought, and used, everything ever sold on a stall, except old boots and some of the swarm of infallible medicines. Everything except these—and, I think I should add, a petticoat, a thing sold in large numbers in many markets. You know the corn-cure stall, of course? There was one not so long ago—perhaps it is there now—near the cattle market beyond King's Cross. "William the Corn-curer," the proprietor styled himself, and the name was displayed in large letters over his triumphing head and the very bad hat that covered it. The stuff was a green and greasy substance, which no doubt did very little harm, except when you smelt it; it cost a penny, and you might have done worse things with your penny—swallowed it, for instance. But William was very confident. "Now then, now then, now then!" he would cry. "'Ere is a novelty which has been tried for forty year an' done better every month. The King of Proosia an' the Emperor of Roosia might envy any o' you ladies an' gents the opportunity I now offer you free gracious. Ho yus! Ho yus! Ho yus! Hi, hi! Any lady in this 'ere company as suffers from corns, warts, bunions, or enlargements *of* the big toe—any lady as will perjooce her corn, wart, bunion, or enlargement *of* the big toe on this 'ere little table a-standing before me, the same I will treat free gracious with my world-famed philosophical preparation of botanical an' geological medica-medica *be*-fore the very respectable company now assembled. What? None of ye got a corn, wart, bunion, or enlargement *of* the big toe? Then you must be old customers o' mine, every one of yer, come to buy my world-famous preparation for somebody else. A penny only! One single penny! Sold for the benefit of sufferin' 'umanity for a single copper penny! This 'ere philosophical preparation for one penny—the same which Sir Frederick Treves would charge King Edward the Seventh fifty guineas a time for if he knew the secret o' manufactor—which 'e don't. Sold again to a lady with no bunions of her own, for a penny, a solitary dee! If one application of my celebrated preparation don't cure—if the distressin' symptoms ain't vanished in the mornin'—if a single dab o' the botanical an' geological preparation don't make you dance for joy—why, then, you can try another dab! A penny! A penny only! Mind you, I'm not one o' them parties as comes 'ere to deceive the sufferin' public, promisin' all sorts o' things as will lead to disappointment. Not me. I don't claim that this 'ere philosophical preparation 'll cure consumption, rickets, an' smoky chimneys, nor convert into a perambulator a foldin' bedstead, like as you might easy be persuaded by some vulgar impostors. No! *All* I says is, that it is the most uniquest invention *of* the Christian airy, an' will take the warts off a brass pump-handle, such is its marvellious philosophical power. A penny again! One copper penny! No objections to silver, an' gold not refused!"

I think I have punctuated that speech

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purely from habit. William himself never condescended to such triviality, but reeled off the whole thing like one sentence, without stopping to take breath. And I think he was the only patterer I ever encountered who pronounced the word "penny" as you and I do. Some call it a "pinny," others a "panny"; but the general fashion favours "wan punnee!"

That is what the trotter-seller usually calls it. "Two legs o' mutton for wan punnee!"



"TROTTERS."

is a cry I remember well. It can still be heard in the remote fastnesses of Camden Town and the Borough, though the edge was worn off the ancient joke many years ago. In pursuit of my duty as an inquirer into things in general I have tried a sheep's trotter, and I can most warmly recommend it to any person passionately fond of gristle. Personally, a passion for gristle is not one of my vices. My trotter, by the way, cost me a whole penny. The merchant explained that those at two a penny were all sold, and, moreover, that they were so very small that so haughty a nobleman as myself would disdain to appear in public with one. I suspected that astute tradesman of selling me a ha'porth of trotter and a ha'porth of gammon; but after trying the trotter I decided that on the whole I should have preferred a complete penn'orth of gammon, plain.

Trotters were a favourite article of food among the porters at Billingsgate not so long ago. There were two foreign Jews who kept stalls in opposition, and one of these tradesmen contrived to play his real or assumed ignorance of the English language to a tune of profit. "Dese on vat de ship do run, tree for two ha'pence each, two for tree ha'pence each!" was his announcement; and it was left to the puzzled native to discover what the exact price was, between the extremes of three a penny and two for threepence. As a result he pouched all sorts of prices without varying his song; and at the worst, if a cantankerous customer insisted, he could sell at the lowest interpretation, still with a profit, doubtless. The opposition Jew was cautious and subtle. He apprehended possible trouble in the flagrant ambiguity of his competitor — and I have no doubt that trouble sometimes came. So he contented himself with answering the repeated confusions of the other with a steady and persistent "Same dis side de vay — same dis side de vay!" I think it was the most cautious offer to negotiate "without prejudice" I have ever run against.

Pigs' trotters, I have discovered, are more expensive than sheep's—twice the price. But then you may go into a good restaurant and have the very thing offered you under the name of *pied du porc à* something or other at about eighteenpence.

When I said I had tried everything sold on a stall except old boots and medicines, I meant to exclude also that mysterious red fluid called sarsaparilla wine. At fairs and market-places one sees a construction which it would be sacrilege to call a stall, a vast vermilion thing on wheels, speckled with brass taps and gilt decoration—something between a fire-engine and a Chinese joss-house. The taps exude the "wine," and a careful inspection of the faces of the customers as they retired from the fray decided me long ago to postpone my own experiment. And then—then—I was one morning looking out from

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my bedroom window in an inn which overlooked the site of a very busy fair. It was early, and the show-people were building their booths. The sarsaparilla-wine merchant was preparing, too. He had taken his joss-house to a convenient corner by a ditch, and he was filling up his machinery by the aid of a scarlet bucket with a gilt rim. When I was dressed and had finished my breakfast I strolled out and took a glance at that ditch; and somehow that experiment got postponed again—indefinitely.

The "sarsaparilla wine," I believe, is held to combine the uses of a beverage with the delights of a medicine. Personally, I have a dislike for such compromises. Give me rather the blatant lecturer on therapeutics, mounted on a cart, with a chart of the digestive system and a row of bottles of the Universal Elixir. You know the scientist I mean, and you know with what indignation he would repudiate the inclusion of his establishment in an article on stalls. You must also know his chart, mounted on rollers like a map, with the circulation of the blood very red, the alimentary system very blue, and the nervous system very black. The scientist himself is very much in earnest, and he bangs his chart with an impassioned stick. "I am not 'ere to-night, ladies an' gentlemen," he says, "to delood you, nor to deceive you, nor to bamboozle you, nor to 'umbug you, nor to make up for scientific an' medicinal ignorance by silly jokes an' unphysiological nonsense. No! A heducated man of science, drove out o' the corrupt ring of registered practitioners by professional jealousy, an' professional spite,



"THE UNIVERSAL ELIXIR."

an' professional greed, I come free an' open to show you all, to demonsterate to you, 'ow you are robbed, 'ow you are delooded, 'ow you are bamboozled an' 'umbugged by the so called qualified doctors that fattens upon the infirmities of 'uman nature. Ladies an' gentlemen, if you go to a doctor in a fashionable square, with a brass plate on the door, for to be attended to, what does that doctor do? He charges you, that's certain, an'

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that's all that is certain, an' all he thinks about. What else does he do? You dunno. He dunno. Nobody dunno. I'm sure *I* dunno, an' I dunno nobody else but what dunno. He gives you a bottle o' stuff, p'r'aps, or a box o' pills. Do 'e tell you what's in that bottle o' stuff, or what them pills is made of? Not 'im. 'E won't tell you, an' I don't believe 'e knows 'isself. Do 'e tell you what the haction 'll be on the 'uman body? Not 'im. 'E dunno that, an' I'm sure 'e wouldn't like me to tell you. But 'ere I 'ave a bottle o' stuff, an' 'ere I 'ave a pill; an' I won't take—no, not five hundred pound if you offered it for either of 'em till I've explained clear what the haction is of them two unrivalled remedies. I 'ave 'ere a correck view of the 'ole digestive system, an' a view of the blood system, an' a view of the nervous system; the three medicinal systems which, if I didn't exactly discover 'em myself—an' I won't deny but what I came very close to it—nevertheless are very near as important as some o' the things I *did* discover. Well, ladies an' gentlemen, we'll take the digestive system. Supposin' an affection of the digestive system, such as gashtric fever, typhoid, indigestion, alimental stultification, or even the common an' very prevalent *casus belli*, commonly called stomach-ache. Having took the mixture, or the pill, as the case may be, in the ordinary way in the *trappum osculatum*, or mouth, it passes, as you will perceive, into the digestive system; an' 'avin' arrived there, an' remainin' there, an' bein' there, why there it is! There it is, in the precise spot wanted, and it exercises a beneficent, emollient, dulciferous, soporiferous, remedial cure in a way which it would take a week to explain in a scientific manner, which you wouldn't understand. So much for the digestive system, which you will now comprehend so thoroughly that I need not explain it further. Ah, but, says you, very properly, s'pose the trouble is in the nervous system or the circulation o' the blood, what then? It is then, ladies an' gentlemen, that my world-renowned elixir and igstrornary pill prove their incon—testable superiority over the morbiferous, pestiferous nostrums and paternostrums of the so-called profession. Absorbed first, in the usual manner, by the *trappum laterum*, they pass into the digestive system, which is coloured blue, till they arrive at the *ne plus ultra*, or outer wall of the stomach, or *panarium*, and then, with a saltatory gambado, which is the peculiar property of their most expensive ingredient, they pass, *per saltum*, or, as you might say, *cum grano salis*, into the nervous system, which is coloured black, *or* into the circulation o' the blood, which is coloured red, consekins o' the red corpuscles predominating in the proportion of fifty to one, which is long odds, as I think you will agree, and proves a cure to be as good as certain with the very first dose. For you will observe that, it being fifty to one in favour of a cure with the first dose, it is fifty times fifty to one in favour of a certain cure with the second, as I once proved to Professor 'uxley by the celebrated mathematical rule of *tertium quid*, or decimal rule o' three, to *his* intense amazement. Now, then, just to show you, just to demonsterate to you that I am not in the least like the common so-called profession, I will proceed to sell this invaluable mixture at the popular price of sixpence a bottle, bottle included. Pills, twopence. There is nothing to equal the mixture, as I have incon—testably proved to you, except the pills, and nothink in the 'ole world like the pills except the mixture. And remember, ladies and gents, that if it is fifty to one bar none on a cure with the first dose of either, and two thousand five hundred to one on a cure with the second, there is nothing in this wonderful world about us that can withstand a dose of the pills and mixture combined. Thank you, mum, thank you. You too, mum? Here it is. Remember, I am not limitin' you to one bottle—I am equally ready to sell two, an' I do not object to sell a dozen to the same person. Now, then, for sixpence only!"

I think I have written about whelk-stalls in another number of THE STRAND MAGAZINE, in which I paid a tribute to the high moral qualities of the whelk and to its indomitable fortitude under misfortune. I also told the anecdote of the whelk accidentally run over by a waggon, and what the whelk-seller had to pay for the broken wheel. So that there is not much left to say here, except to rejoice that the whelk, with characteristic gristly obstinacy, still holds its place in the London streets; and most earnestly to recommend those in search of a new sensation to try whelks swallowed whole. They will get what they want.

Bookstalls are going, going, but they are not yet gone. I mean, of course, the genuine stalls on barrows, not the hybrid imitations stuck in front of booksellers' shops. You can find the real article in Farringdon Road, in Aldgate High Street, in High Street, Camden Town, in the Borough, and in other

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shady nooks. I fear the barrow-stalls are not so profitable as once they were. I am sorry, partly on general grounds, but chiefly because the literary coster was so pleasant a contradiction. I like to have a classic recommended to me in the husky tones and the dialect usually associated with bloaters. "'Leventh edition, sir, well knowed by canoozers to be the rarest of all on 'em. Fine calf bindin', with on'y one side of it gawn an' a little bit o' the other. All the pages in it, more or less, an' on'y wants sortin' out. They'd 'ave a quid for it in Charing Crawse Road, but say a tanner—well, fourpence, if that'll tempt yer!" There is a copy of Blair's Sermons, which I have been watching with fascinated interest for years, on a stall in Aldgate. I think I shall go down again to-morrow to see how it is getting on. I have promised myself to buy it some day—I can have it for twopence, I know. But I am always risking losing the relic for the sheer enjoyment of observing the stall-keeper's desperate efforts to get rid of it. It was a shilling once, when I first met it, and its owner contented himself with casually pushing it forward over the others when a clergyman stopped at the stall. Then it was ninepence, and he took to recommending it by word of mouth. I believe he drove one clergyman away for ever by suggesting, with incautious bluntness, that as all the sermons were precious long he might crib enough to last him his "'ole nachral puff" by cutting each into three or four, "an' nobody 'ud spot the fake." After that it got down to sixpence, and the indomitable tradesman took to recommending it generally as a great bibliographical rarity which would bring a vast price some day, in a sale. In its later and twopenny days he desperately represents it as a work of reckless comicality, the title being part of the joke, a very suitable wedding present, and just the thing for a young man starting business as a doctor.



"LEVENTH EDITION, SIR."

Have you ever observed the wonderful pictorial embellishments of the Italian ice-cream stall? Truly the Italians are an artistic nation. There is an ice-cream stall in Camden Town that I visit regularly, for the sake of the shipwreck painted on the side. The terrible blue and white waves, of all sorts and kinds of jaggedness and curliness, stuck full of broken masts and spars like pins on a cushion, are enough to daunt the hardiest beholder, and must drive away many customers of tender nerves. The wreck, a pathetically shapeless brown blob, is garnished with a yellow mast, very splintery at the top, to which clings a terrified and corpulent mariner, as big as the wreck and twice as pathetic. But the triumph of the work is the lightning. It is vermilion, and it spreads all over the composition in the most terrible and amazing streaks and twiddles, radiating from a large, solid mass just over the wreck. The execution of that lightning

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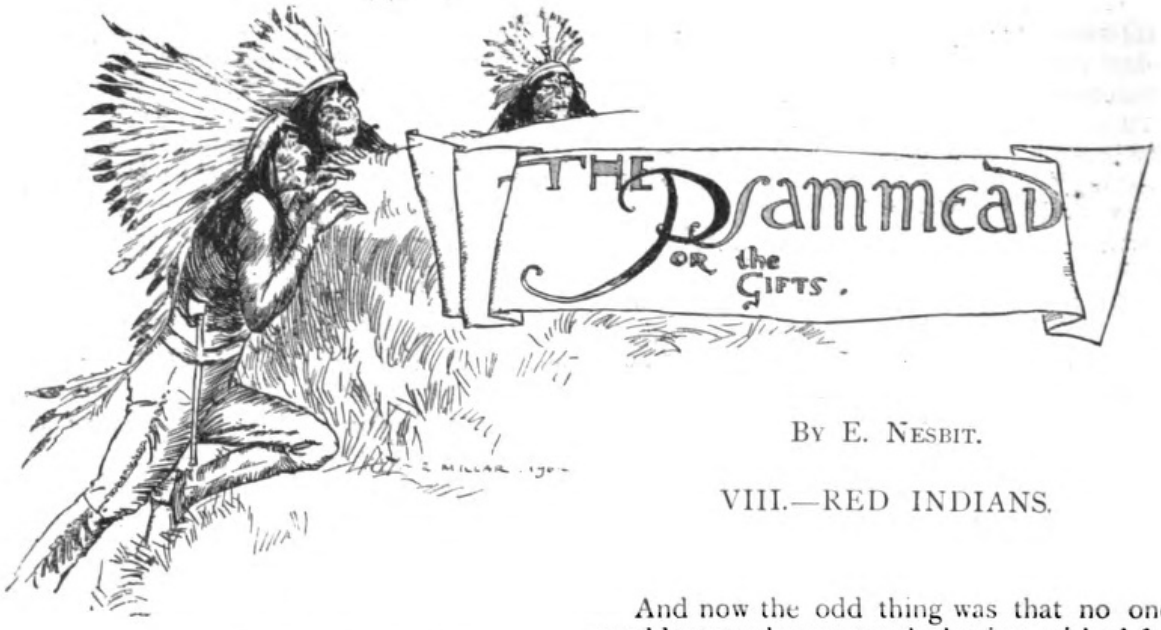
"ICE-CREAMS."

is a marvel. It can only have been done by corking up the paint in a glass bottle, and then shying the bottle, with great force, accurately into the middle of the picture. How any small boy can face that lightning, even in pursuit of ice-cream, astonishes me. But in pursuit of ice-cream the street boy is capable of anything. I have seen him sucking at it in January, with the London improved snow making the streets black and slimy.

I have never been able to understand how the ice-cream stall-keeper makes his trade pay. The water, and the sour milk, and the mildewed flour are cheap enough, of course, and if that were all he used the profit would be handsome. But how can he find all the microbes for the money?

A kind of stall has appeared of late years in which the proprietor makes sweetstuff in full view of the purchasing public. It is a most astonishing conjuring trick, performed thus. Toffee is boiling in a large pot, and from time to time this toffee is poured out into a flat, shallow dish to cool. The performer, with the muscles of his more or less brawny arms bared to above the elbows, grabs handfuls of this sticky, half-cooled toffee and hangs them on a nail. Once the stuff is on the nail the athlete in charge drags it out in a long rope till he has to loop it up and hang it over the nail again. So he goes on, dragging it out and looping it up, looping and dragging; and, marvellous to tell, as he loops and drags the black stuff changes colour, grows gradually brown, then yellow, and at last white. So that by checking his gymnastics at various stages the exhibitor provides the material of multi-coloured sweets all out of one material. It is a great marvel, and I linger, fascinated, to watch the trick. But I don't feel attracted to buy. Some old-fashioned prejudice of mine makes me prefer my toffee in its primitive state, before it is man-handled and wrestled with. But I admire and wonder, nevertheless, for the phenomenon is against all precedent. Anybody familiarly acquainted with the average hand of the average stall-keeper would be prepared to see anything white he handled grow black, but this reverse process—but there, never mind!

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By E. Nesbit.

VIII.—RED INDIANS.

PROBABLY the next day would have been a greater success if Cyril had not been reading "The Last of the Mohicans." The story was running in his head at breakfast, and as he took his third cup of tea he said, dreamily: "I wish there were Red Indians in England—not big ones, you know, but little ones, just about the right size for us to fight."

Everyone disagreed with him at the time, and no one attached any importance to the incident. But when they went down to the sand-pit to ask for a hundred pounds in two-shilling pieces with Queen Victoria's head on to prevent mistakes—which they had decided on after long discussion as a really reasonable wish that must turn out well—they found out that they had done it again. For the psammead, which was very cross and sleepy, said:—

"Oh, don't bother me. You've had your wish."

"I didn't know it," said Cyril.

"Don't you remember yesterday?" said the sand fairy, still more disagreeably. "You asked me to let you have your wishes wherever you happened to be, and you wished this morning, and you've got it."

"Oh, have we?" said Robert. "What is it?"

"So you've forgotten," said the psammead, beginning to burrow. "Never mind, you'll know soon enough. And I wish you joy of it. A nice thing you've let yourselves in for."

"We always do, somehow," said Jane, sadly.

And now the odd thing was that no one could remember anyone's having wished for anything that morning. The wish about the Red Indians had not stuck in anyone's head. It was a most anxious morning. Everyone was trying to remember what had been wished for, and no one could, and everyone kept expecting something awful to happen every minute. It was most agitating; they knew from what the psammead had said that they must have wished for something more than usually undesirable; and they spent several hours in most agonizing uncertainty. It was not till nearly dinner-time that Jane tumbled over "The Last of the Mohicans," which had, of course, been left face downwards on the floor, and when Anthea had picked her and the book up she suddenly said, "I know!" and sat down flat on the carpet.

"Oh, Pussy, how awful! It was Indians he wished for—Cyril—at breakfast; don't you remember? He said, 'I wish there were Red Indians in England'—and now there are, and they're going about scalping people all over the country, as likely as not."

"Perhaps they're only in Northumberland and Durham," said Jane, soothingly. It was almost impossible to believe that it could really hurt people much to be scalped so far away as that.

"Don't you believe it," said Anthea; "the sammyadd said we'd let ourselves in for a nice thing. That means they'll come *here*. And suppose they scalped the Lamb?"

"Perhaps the scalping would come right again at sunset,' said Jane, but she did not speak so hopefully as usual.

"Not it," said Anthea; "the things that

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from the garden was a row of dark heads, all highly feathered.

"It's our only chance," whispered Anthea. "Much better than to wait for their blood-freezing attack. We must pretend like mad—like that game of cards where you pretend you've got aces when you haven't. Fluffing, they call it, I think. Now then. Whoop!"

With four wild war-whoops—or as near them as English children could be expected to go without any previous practice—they rushed through the gate and struck four war-like attitudes in face of the line of Red Indians. These were all about the same height, and that height was Cyril's.

"I hope to goodness they can talk English," said Cyril, through his attitude.

Anthea knew they could, though she never knew how she came to know it. She had a white towel tied to a walking-stick. This was a flag of truce, and she waved it, in the hope that the Indians would know what it was. Apparently they did, for one who was browner than the others stepped forward.



"'YE SEEK A POW-WOW?' HE SAID."

"Ye seek a pow-wow?" he said, in excellent English. "I am Snake-skin, of the mighty tribe of Rock-dwellers."

"And I," said Anthea, with a sudden inspiration, "am the Black Panther—chief of the—the—the—Mazzawattee tribe. My brothers—I don't mean—yes I do—the tribe—I mean the Mazzawattees—are in ambush below the brow of yonder hill."

"And what mighty warriors be these?" asked Snakeskin, turning to the others.

Cyril said he was the great chief Squirrel of the Moning Congo tribe, and seeing that Jane was sucking her thumb, and could evidently think of no name for herself, he added, "This great warrior is Wild Cat—Pussy Ferox we call it in this land—leader of the vast Phit-eezi tribe."

"And thou, valorous Redskin?" Snakeskin inquired, suddenly, of Robert, who, taken unawares, could only reply that he was the great chief Bobs—leader of the Cape Mounted Police.

"And now," said Black Panther, "our tribes—if we just whistle them up—will far outnumber your puny forces. So resistance is useless. Return, therefore, to your own land, O brother, and smoke pipes of peace in your wampums with your squaws and your medicine men, and dress yourselves in gayest wig-wams, and eat happily of the juicy, fresh-caught moccasins."

"You've got it all wrong," murmured Cyril, angrily. But Snakeskin only looked inquiringly at her.

"Thy customs are other than ours, O

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Black Panther," he said. "Bring up thy tribe that we may hold pow-wow in state before them, as becomes great chiefs."

"We'll bring them up right enough," said Anthea, "with their bows and arrows and tomahawks and scalping-knives, and everything you can think of, if you don't look sharp and go."

She spoke bravely enough, but the hearts of all the children were beating furiously, and their breath came in shorter and shorter gasps. For the little real Red Indians were closing up round them—coming nearer and nearer with angry murmurs—so that they were the centre of a crowd of dark, cruel faces.

"It's no go," whispered Robert. "I knew it wouldn't be. We must make a bolt for the psammead. It might help us. If it doesn't—well, I suppose we shall come alive again at sunset. I wonder if scalping hurts as much as they say?"

"I'll wave the flag again," said Anthea. "If they stand back we'll run for it."

She waved the towel, and the chief commanded his followers to stand back. Then, charging wildly at the place where the line of Indians was thinnest, the four children started to run. Their first rush knocked down some half-dozen Indians, over whose blanketed bodies the children leaped and made straight for the sand-pit. This was no time for the safe, easy way by which carts go down; right over the edge of the sand-pit they went, among the yellow and pale purple flowers and dried grasses, past the little sand-martin's little front doors, skipping, clinging, bounding, stumbling, sprawling, and finally rolling.

Snakeskin and his followers came up with them just at the very spot where they had seen the psammead that morning.

Breathless and defeated, the wretched children now awaited their fate. Sharp knives and axes gleamed round them, but worse than these was the cruel light in the eyes of Snakeskin and his followers.

"Ye have lied to us, O Black Panther of the Mazzawattees—and thou, too, Squirrel of the Moning Congos. These also—Pussy Ferox of the Phit-eezi and Bobs of the Cape Mounted Police—these also have lied to us, if not with their tongues, yet by their silence. Ye have lied under the cover of the truce flag of the pale-face. Ye have no followers. Your tribes are far away—following the hunting trail. What shall be their doom?" he concluded, turning with a bitter smile to the other Red Indians

"Build we the fire!" shouted his followers, and at once a dozen ready volunteers started to look for fuel. The four children, each held between two strong little Indians, cast despairing glances round them. Oh, if they could only see the psammead!

"Do you mean to scalp us first and then roast us?" asked Anthea, desperately.

"Of course!" Snakeskin opened his eyes at her; "it's always done."

The Indians had formed a ring round the children and now sat on the ground gazing at their captives. There was a threatening silence.

Then slowly by twos and threes the Indians who had gone to look for firewood came back, and they came back empty-handed. They had not been able to find a single stick of wood for a fire! No one ever can, as a matter of fact, in that part of Kent.

The children drew a deep breath of relief, but it ended in a moan of terror, for bright knives were being brandished all about them. Next moment each child was seized by an Indian—each closed its eyes and tried not to scream. They waited for the sharp agony of the knife. It did not come. Next moment they were released and fell in a trembling heap. Their heads did not hurt at all. They only felt strangely cool. Wild war-whoops rang in their ears. When they ventured to open their eyes they saw four of their foes dancing round them with wild leaps and screams, and each of the four brandished in his hand a scalp of long, flowing black hair. They put their hands to their heads—their own scalps were safe. The poor, untutored savages had, indeed, scalped the children. But they had only, so to speak, scalped them of the black calico ringlets!

The children fell into each other's arms, sobbing and laughing.

"Their scalps are ours," chanted the chief. "Ill-rooted were their ill-fated hairs! They came off in the hands of the victors; without struggle, without resistance, they yielded their scalps to the conquering Snakeskin! Oh, how little a thing is a scalp so lightly won!"

"They'll take our real ones in a minute, you see if they don't," said Robert, trying to rub some of the red ochre off his face and hands on to his hair.

"Cheated of our just and fiery revenge are we," the chant went on, "but there are other torments than the scalping-knife and the flames. Yet is the slow fire the correct thing. Oh, strange, unnatural country wherein

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"THEY SAW FOUR OF THEIR FOES DANCING ROUND THEM WITH WILD LEAPS AND SCREAMS."

a man may find no wood to burn his enemy! Ah, for the boundless forests of my native land, where the great trees for thousands of miles grow but to furnish firewood wherewithal to burn our foes. Ah, would we were but in our native forest once more."

Suddenly, like a flash of lightning, the golden gravel shone all round the four children instead of the dusky figures. For every single Indian had vanished on the instant at their leader's word. The psammead must have been there all the time. And it had given the Indian chief his wish!

Martha brought home a jug with a pattern of storks and long grasses on it; also she brought back all Anthea's money.

"My cousin, she give me the jug for luck. She said it was an odd one what the basin of had got smashed."

"Oh, Martha, you are a dear!" sighed Anthea, throwing her arms round her.

"Yes," giggled Martha, "you'd better make the most of me while you've got me. I shall give your ma notice directly the minute she comes back."

"Oh, Martha, we haven't been so *very* horrid to you, have we?" asked Anthea, aghast.

"Oh, it ain't that, miss," Martha giggled more than ever. "I'm a-goin' to be married. It's Beale, the gamekeeper. He's been a-proposin' to me off and on ever since you come home from the clergyman's, where you got locked up on the church tower. And to-day I said the word an' made him a happy man."

Anthea put the seven and fourpence back in the missionary-box and pasted paper over the place where the poker had broken it. She was very glad to be able to do this, and she does not know to this day whether breaking open a missionary-box is or is not a hanging matter.

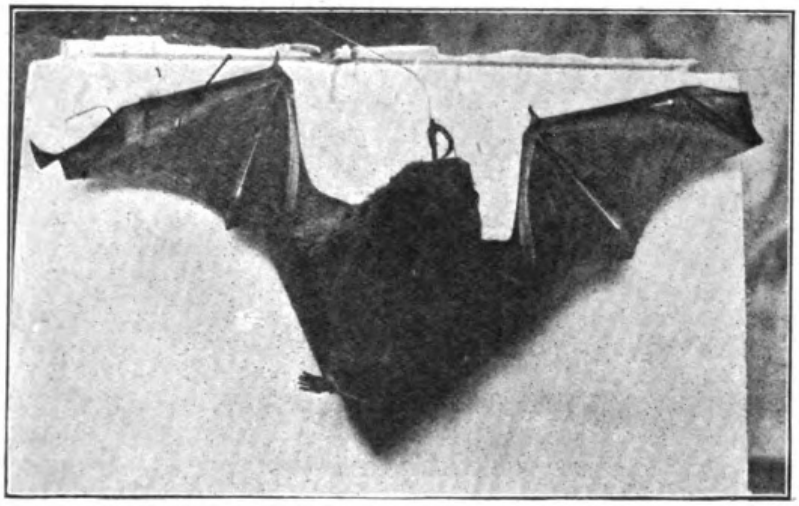
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*Curiosities.**

[We shall be glad to receive Contributions to this section, and to pay for such as are accepted.]

NOT A FISH STORY.

"A friend of mine who had been trout-fishing was returning home at dusk, with his rod over his shoulder, when he felt a pull at his line. Looking round he saw that a bat had taken the trout fly; this he successfully 'landed.' The hook can be seen in the bat's mouth. I never heard of this happening before."—Mr. James G. Dick, Easton Lodge, Cliftonville, Belfast.



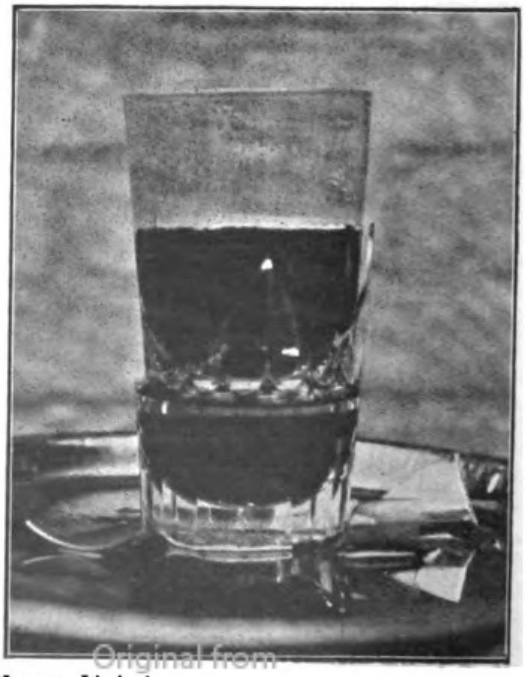
AN AUTOMOBILE ANIMAL AMBULANCE.

"This is probably the only animal ambulance in the world which is an automobile. It is the design of Dr. W. F. Staniforth, a veterinary surgeon, of Cleveland, Ohio, who has a regular hospital for dogs and cats. When a case of illness is reported the doctor goes for it in his auto. The lower part is used for dogs and the upper part for felines, as they need to be separated usually. The doctor is a great friend of these animals, and if their owners have no money to pay for treatment he makes no charge. In the picture he is seen going after a case accompanied by his own pet bulldogs, which frequently make calls with him."—Mr. D Allan Willey, Baltimore.



THE MARKER WAS ASTONISHED.

"The accompanying photo. shows a remarkable affair which occurred at the Hendon Road Unionist Club recently. Playing with a friend in the billiard-room I ordered two bottles of stout. These were opened in the bar and sent up, in glasses, in the lift. The marker brought up the lift sharply, there was a crash, and then the marker cried: 'Look here, gentlemen!' The edge of the tray had evidently projected beyond the lift and caught the framework, with the result that one glass had jumped into the other, as in the photo. This remarkable result was witnessed by several gentlemen who were in the room at the time. The photo. was taken in the yard of the club next day by Mr. C. H. Hodgson, Hendon Road, Sunderland."—Mr. J. J. Witten, 38, Hendon Road, Sunderland.



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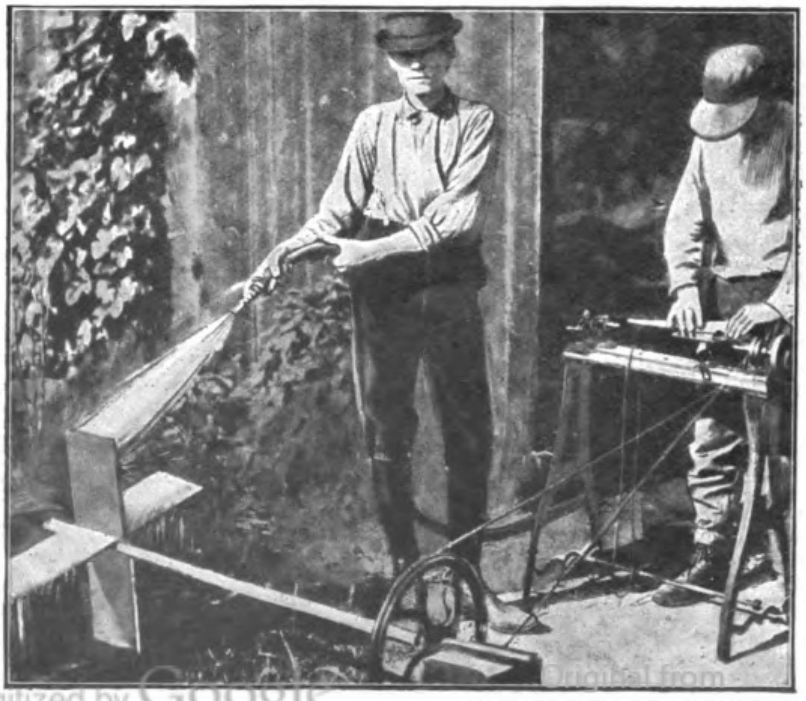


NOT A FLATTERING LIKENESS.

"This curiosity is not, as the photograph implies, a freak. When in France, at a small village named Villequier, on the Seine, a pig's head was hanging outside a butcher's shop, and one of my friends standing behind it, it looked as if he had a pig's head, hence this curious result."—Mr. Chas. R. B. Godmans, Muntham, Horsham.

INGENIOUS BOYS.

"Several Los Angeles boys have improvised a sawmill from odds and ends in which surprising ingenuity is displayed, as the accompanying photograph shows. This picture was taken while they were earnestly at work with their odd machine, which actually saws very well. The boys took an amateur turning-lathe and mounted on it a small circular saw of their own make. A line-shaft was made of an old broom-handle, at one end of which is a paddle-wheel constructed from a few pine shingles, and at the other the belt-wheel, taken from an invalid sewing-machine. When the clever inventors want their machine to run the water is turned on the paddle-wheel by means of an ordinary hose attached to a hydrant in the back-yard, and then the sawdust begins to fly in real sawmill style, while the teeth cut rapidly through the wood. The sponsors for this unique outfit are Delbert Axelson, engineer and nozzleman; Edgar Brown, sawyer and general manager; and Edmund Lucey, solicitor to work up enthusiasm among the other small boys."—Mr. John L. Von Blon, Los Angeles, California.





From a Photo. by C. F. Treble, Brixton.

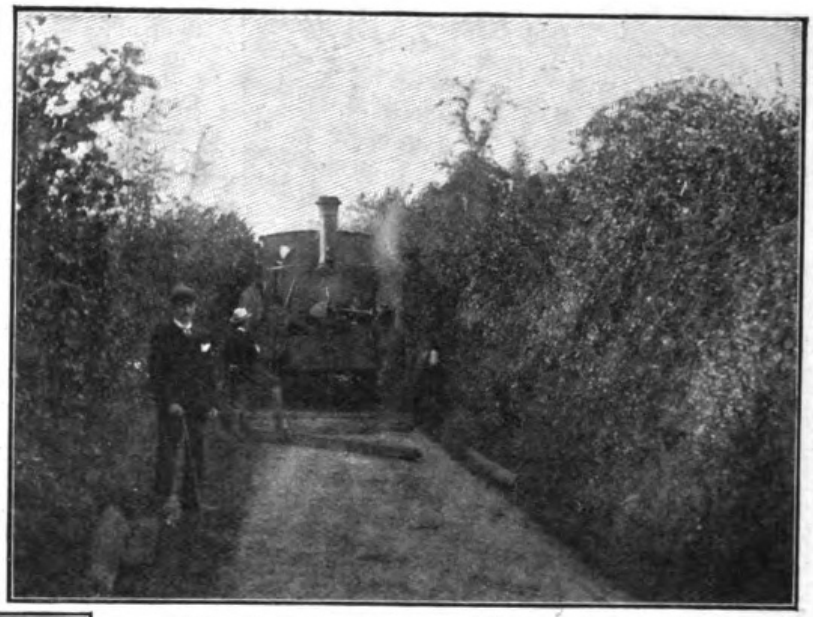
A NOVELTY IN WAISTCOATS.

"What Lord Kitchener has described as a 'very unique' waistcoat, and Lord Roberts considers 'most interesting,' is the result of a collection which has been made by Mr. George Parke, jun., of 'Grosvenor,' Sydney Road, Stockwell, of the different regimental badges of nearly every regiment in the British Army. The collection took a long time to get together, and cost a good deal of money before completion. Mr. Parke arranged the badges upon a red waistcoat, and he terms it his Coronation waistcoat."—Mr. J. While, 124, Loughborough Road, Brixton, S.W.

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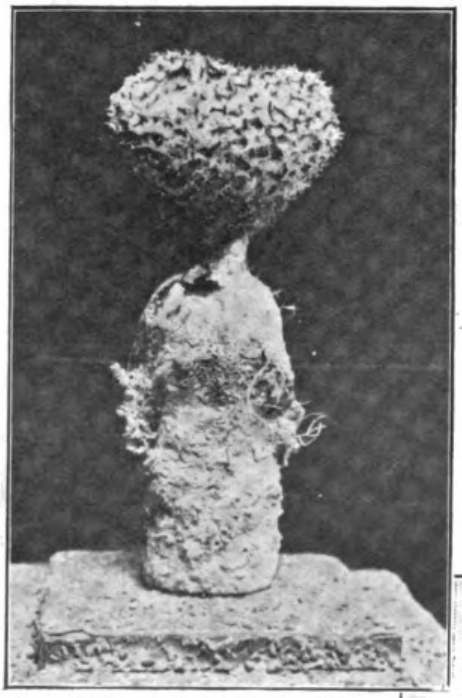
A LOCOMOTIVE'S HOLIDAY.

"It is, I should think, of rare occurrence to meet a railway engine in a Devonshire lane, where one is generally said to wander 'with love-stories olden for theme.' The enclosed is a photograph of a railway engine in such a lane near Axminster, Devon. The engine was being taken from the London and South-Western Railway to Great Trill, to help in the construction of the Axminster and Lyme Regis Light Railway. At some parts the lane was so narrow that the banks had to be cut back to effect a passage."—Mr. W. H. Bellamy, Axminster, Devon.



AN ADVENTUROUS BOTTLE.

"I send you the photo. of a bottle supposed to be of Bass's



ale, which was found in sixty fathoms of water in the sea off Barbados. It was fished out by Mr. Taylor, and is in a perfect state. It is encrusted with moss, coral, and weed, and a large and beautiful sponge has grown on the top of it."—Miss Maud Gibson, 7, Amblecote Road, Grove Park, Kent.

THE TOP OF THE LADDER.

"'The Top of the Ladder' picture which I send you was obtained under the following extraordinary circumstances. At a hook and ladder competition held on Labour Day, the first Monday in September, in Thorold, Ont., not a great while ago, the ladder-climber of one of the fire companies met with an accident while in the act of ascending, his companions below having failed to keep a firm hold of the upright ladder. The result was that down came ladder, fireman, and all. Immediately arose varying shouts from the spectators, some crying, 'He didn't touch the top,' while others were equally emphatic in calling out, 'Yes, he did.' Even the judges were quite unable to decide the matter, and so after a brief delay another company was allowed to take its turn. The writer, who had been looking at the 'finder' of his camera and had 'pressed the button' just as the climber was apparently ascending, thought to himself, 'This picture is a failure.' After the tournament he retired to the seclusion of the dark room. Imagine his surprise and pleasure when in the course of developing he found a man with one hand touching the top rung of a vertical ladder, his feet wide apart, and his whole body showing extreme haste and exertion. As this picture was the only one of its particular kind that the writer had attempted to take during the tournament there was not the slightest room for doubt that those who had shouted 'He didn't touch the top' were mistaken. A printed proof was shown to the members of the local fire company, and it is almost needless to add that it excited much interest."—The Rev. P. L. Spencer, Jarvis, Ont.



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WHAT A WIDE-ANGLE LENS CAN DO.

"The three photos. shown here illustrate what can happen to a person if photographed with a wide-angle lens. Photo. No. 1 shows the model as he really is, photo. No. 2 is of the same person taken with a wide-angle lens, and in photo. No. 3 the hand is extended towards the camera with strange results."

AN AMUSING JUMBLE.

"I send herewith a jumble of American magazine advertisements. You will observe the opportunity for a trip over an entirely new route of travel, personally conducted by Hiprah Hunt, also advice about the time of getting married and timely caution concerning the safety or danger of your bank account, etc." — Mr. William Reader, Columbia Falls, Montana.



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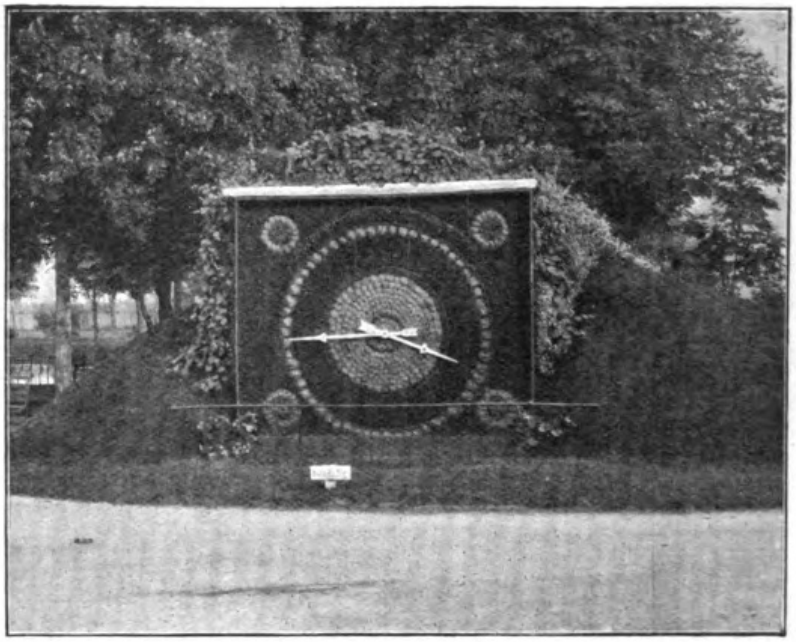
A BEE-HIVE IN A CHIMNEY-STACK.

"One of the chimneys at Timsbury Manor has been stormed by bees, and when the photo. was taken they had been there only six weeks. The slot in the middle is 18in. long by 4in. wide, and the comb extends right through and bulges out on the other side, much the same as that photographed. The operation of taking the photograph was rather ticklish, as I had to rig up the camera on the roof by lashing two legs of the tripod to the coping of the roof, about 8ft. from the bees. The comb can be seen almost covered with bees. Timsbury Manor is the property of T. Vickers, Esq., of Vickers, Sons, and Maxim, and I have his permission to send this photograph to you."—C. Cowell, Timsbury Manor, near Romsey, Hants.

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A FLOWER CLOCK.

"I send you a photograph of what is known as the 'Flower Clock,' located in a public park at Detroit, Mich. The dial or face is composed of flowers and foliage, and is about 6ft. in width. Upon an axle in the centre revolve the wooden hands, which represent the minutes and hours as in an ordinary timepiece. They are moved around the dial by a small stream of water, which turns the axle. They record the divisions of time throughout the twenty-four hours, the motions of each hand being regulated accordingly. The flower clock requires no winding so long as the water-power is turned on, and it runs throughout the summer season."—Mr. Day Allan Willey, Baltimore.



PERSIAN TEAR-BOTTLES.

"The quaint glasses or bottles depicted in the accompanying



photograph are two rare Persian tear-glasses of a beautiful blue colour, standing 13in. high, and having a like circumference at the thickest part. Although it is pretty generally known that widows in Persia collect their tears in glasses to sprinkle on their husbands' graves, yet such glasses are by no means common, and very few Europeans, however long they have resided in the country, or however extensively they have travelled therein, have seen them, or, having seen them, have guessed to what purpose they are put. This is chiefly due to the fact that only natives are allowed to be present on the great occasion when widows—or, for the matter of that, men also—shed tears profusely, viz., the 'Tazieh,' or religious play to commemorate the deaths of Hassan and Hussain, the sons of Ali, considered by Persians and all Shiah Mohammedans to be the rightful successors of Mahomet the Prophet. The drama setting forth the courage and resignation of the martyrs, the sufferings of their little children, and the heroism of their followers moves the audience to sob as if their hearts would break. The women cover their heads with straw to represent the sand of the desert; the men make bare and smite their breasts; some strike themselves over the bare shoulders with heavy chains; others cut their heads with swords and knives; the track of the cortège on the tenth day, when frenzy runs highest, is marked with blood."—Mr. J. A. Lee, 211, Ivydale Road, Nunhead, S.E.

MURDERED TROUT.

"Here is a photo. taken on the Six Mile Water, near Antrim, of trout poisoned by chemicals run into the water. The trout measure from the size of a minnow up to about 3lb. weight. The Six Mile Water was once the best trout river in Ireland, but the chemical refuse which has once or twice been allowed to run into it has caused the wholesale murder of which my photograph is the witness. It is a sight to make anglers, let alone fishermen, weep, and it is to be hoped that a stop will soon be put to this objectionable practice."—Mr. Wm. M. Gallaher, Malone Park House, Belfast.



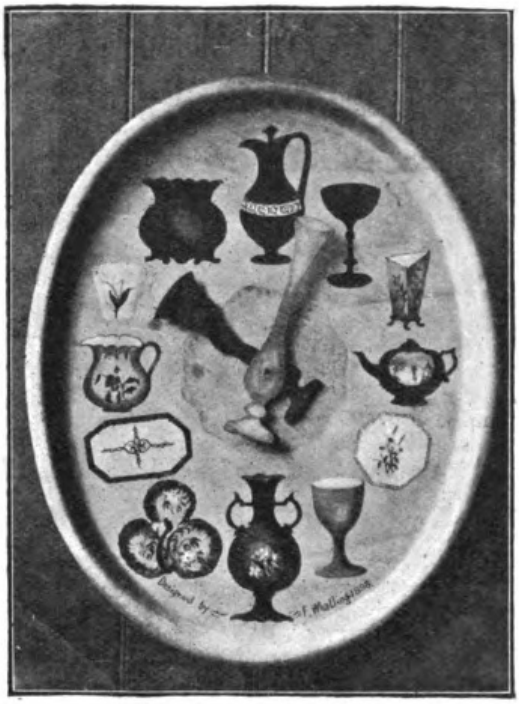
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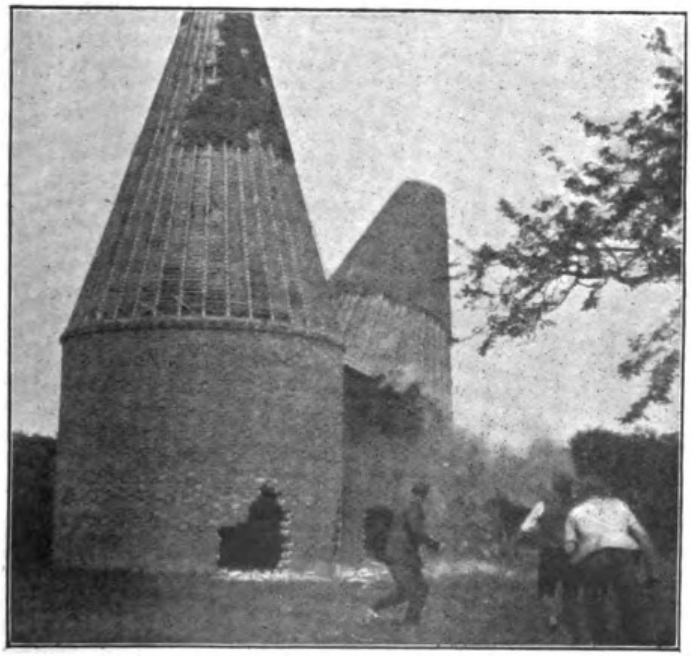
SIXPENCE FOR A LIFE!

"Perhaps the enclosed coin may interest your readers of the Curiosity page, and the publication of a photograph of it may be the means of restoring same to its owner. It was picked up by myself on Peckham Rye. The reason for the inscription on the back is not at once apparent, as such a



medal would not have been given by any society, and the late owner would have had no object in having the sixpence engraved in such a manner. The only construction that can be put on it is that the magnificent sum of sixpence was given as a reward for life-saving, the brave owner being so pleased by this munificence that he had the coin engraved as an example of human generosity and gratitude."—Mr. B. C. Carpenter, 59, Fenwick Road, East Dulwich, S.E.





THE DOOM OF THE "OAST."

"Owing to several causes, principally the use by large hop growers of modern machinery for drying hops by steam-power, farmers in Kent are pulling down their old-fashioned 'oasts,' and the above photograph shows two of these kilns being demolished by a traction-engine after the cooling-room had been removed by hand and with bricks cut out, making holes through which chains were passed and then attached to the engine. One of the buildings was actually taken in the act of falling."—Mr. George Mercy, East Peckham, Tonbridge.

AN INGENIOUS TIMEPIECE.

"The curious clock of which I send you a photo. was designed by Mr. F. Whatling of this town. Mr. Whatling is a china riveter and umbrella maker, and the clock was made by him with various pieces of china which he had repaired. It consists of an ordinary circular clock fixed to the back of a tray, to the front of which the pieces of china are fastened. The face is decorated in brilliant colours, and well drawn for a mechanic or artisan. It keeps good time."—Mr. T. K. Biddle, 73, High Street, Dartford.

DOG "SPECS."

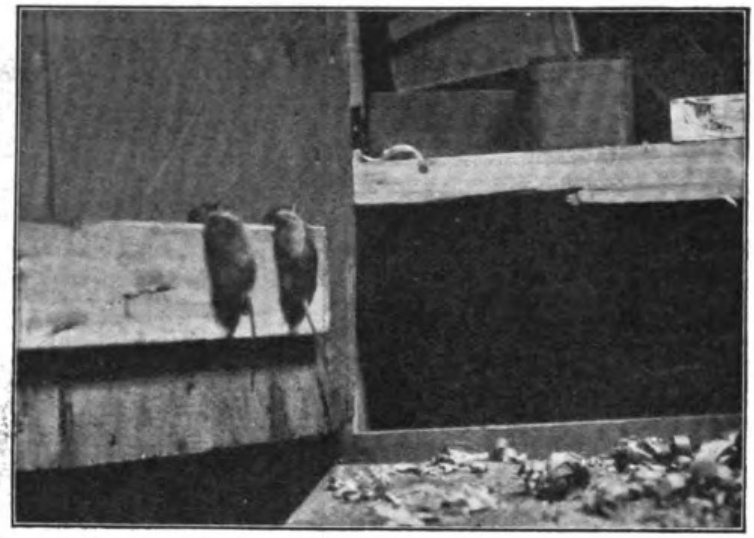
"This is a photo. of one of our customers, for whom we made a pair of auto-specs. to order. This intelligent collie sits on the front seat of his owner's automobile, in the same position you see him now, while the machine goes at top speed. This caused his eyes to get full of dust, to prevent which the specs. were made. His dogship seemed to appreciate them, and makes no effort to get them off."—Mr. E. B. Meyrowitz, Optician, 3, Rue Scribe, Paris.



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A CURIOUS MOUSE-TRAP.

"The two mice, a photograph of which I send you, met their death at the same moment and in exactly the same position. The photo. shows a rough cupboard in a workshop. One evening, as the door of the cupboard was being closed, the mice, in trying to escape, must have jumped at exactly the same instant, but a little too late, as the result shows; they both got jammed between the shelf and the door, and when the latter was opened in the morning the culprits were found as shown in the illustration."—Mr. J. W. Puntis, 10, The Avenue, King Street, Southsea.





SQUASHED!

"I send a photograph which has the appearance of a boy being squashed under a garden roller. It is simply a hat put in front of the roller and a boy with his legs up in the air and hands out at the side at the back."—Mr. P. Russell, 51, Avenue Road, Southend-on-Sea, Essex.



WHY THE FIRE REFUSED TO BURN.

"The other day when the billiard-room fire was lighted it refused to burn, and smoked to such an extent that the chimney was swept as soon as possible. The photograph given below shows the resulting *débris* which came down the chimney when the sweep applied his brush, and which had



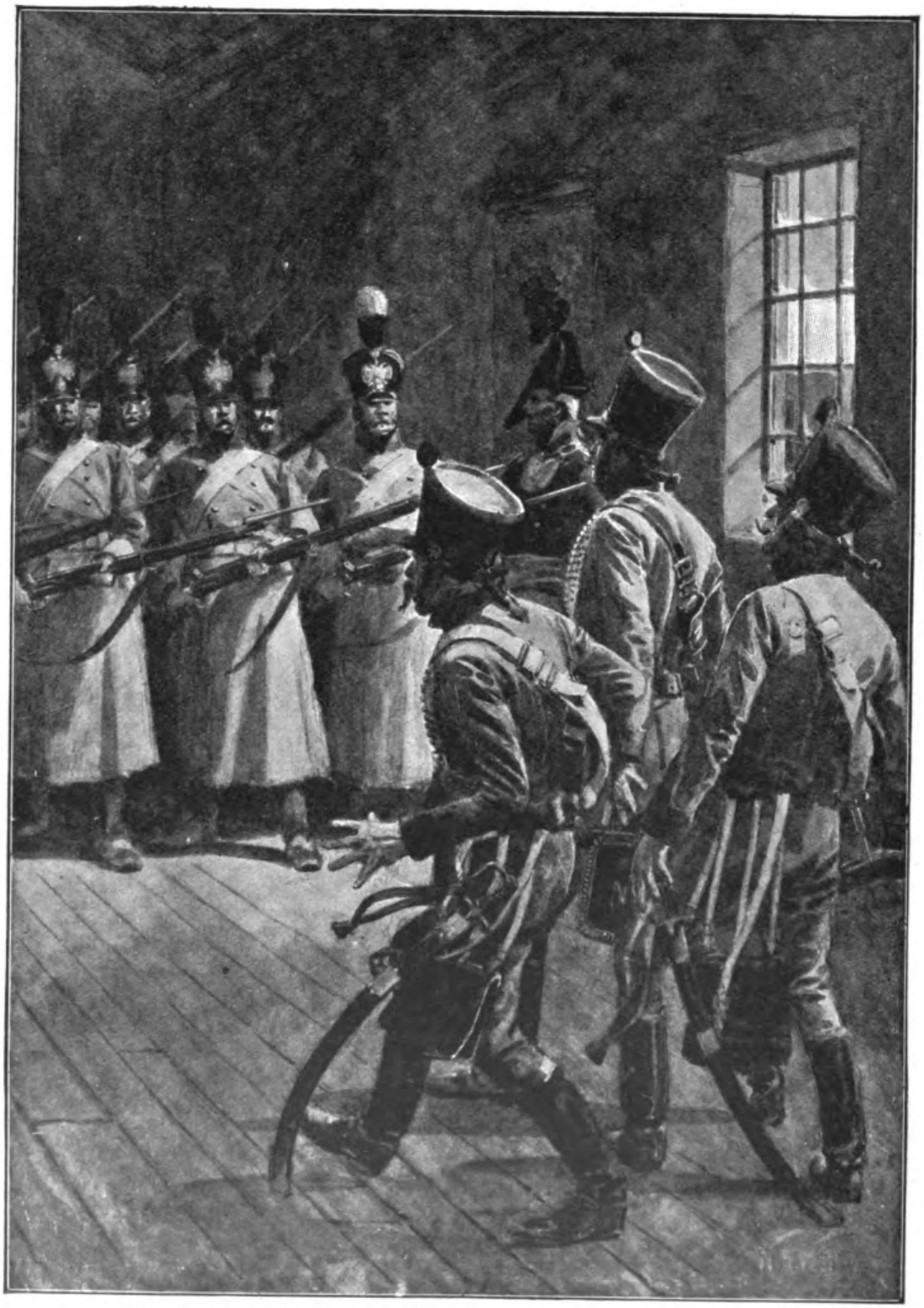
all been deposited there by jackdaws since the chimney was last swept."—Mr. W. L. Chance, Great Alne Hall, Alcester.

A TOMATO-CAN RACE.

"This picture was taken by myself in the town of Merritton last month, and shows three children running races on old tomato-cans which they keep in place on their feet by strings held in the hand. It struck me that this was so peculiar a method for children's play that I 'snapped' them on the spot."—Mr. A. T. Phillips, 12, Cooper Street, Ottawa.

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"RIGHT IN FRONT OF US WAS DRAWN UP A TRIPLE LINE OF RUSSIAN GRENADIERS."

(*See page* 609.)

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THE STRAND MAGAZINE.

Vol. xxiv. DECEMBER, 1902. No. 144.

The Adventures of Etienne Gerard.

By A. Conan Doyle.

III.—HOW THE BRIGADIER RODE TO MINSK.

I WOULD have a stronger wine to-night, my friends, a wine of Burgundy rather than of Bordeaux. It is that my heart, my old soldier heart, is heavy within me. It is a strange thing, this age which creeps upon one. One does not know, one does not understand; the spirit is ever the same, and one does not remember how the poor body crumbles. But there comes a moment when it is brought home, when quick as the sparkle of a whirling sabre it is clear to us, and we see the men we were and the men we are. Yes, yes, it was so to-day, and I would have a wine of Burgundy to-night. White Burgundy—Montrachet——Sir, I am your debtor!

It was this morning in the Champ de Mars. Your pardon, friends, while an old man tells his trouble. You saw the review. Was it not splendid? I was in the enclosure for veteran officers who have been decorated. This ribbon on my breast was my passport. The cross itself I keep at home in a leathern pouch. They did us honour, for we were placed at the saluting point, with the Emperor and the carriages of the Court upon our right.

It is years since I have been to a review, for I cannot approve of many things which I have seen. I do not approve of the red breeches of the infantry. It was in white breeches that the infantry used to fight. Red is for the cavalry. A little more, and they would ask our busbies and our spurs! Had I been seen at a review they might well have said that I, Etienne Gerard, had condoned it. So I have stayed at home. But this war of the Crimea is different. The men go to battle. It is not for me to be absent when brave men gather.

My faith, they march well, those little infantrymen! They are not large, but they are very solid and they carry themselves well. I took off my hat to them as they passed. Then there came the guns. They were good guns, well horsed and well manned. I took off my hat to them. Then came the Engineers, and to them also I took off my hat. There are no braver men than the Engineers. Then came the cavalry, Lancers, Cuirassiers, Chasseurs, and Spahis. To all of them in turn I was able to take off my hat, save only to the Spahis. The Emperor had no Spahis. But when all of the others had passed, what think you came at the close? A brigade of Hussars, and at the charge! Oh, my friends, the pride and the glory and the beauty, the flash and the sparkle, the roar of the hoofs and the jingle of chains, the tossing manes, the noble heads, the rolling cloud, and the dancing waves of steel! My heart drummed to them as they passed. And the last of all, was it not my own old regiment? My eyes fell upon the grey and silver dolmans, with the leopard-skin shabraques, and at that instant the years fell away from me and I saw my own beautiful men and horses, even as they had swept behind their young colonel, in the pride of our youth and our strength, just forty years ago. Up flew my cane. "Chargez! En avant! Vive l'Empéreur!" It was the past calling to the present. But, oh, what a thin, piping voice! Was this the voice that had once thundered from wing to wing of a strong brigade? And the arm that could scarce wave a cane, were these the muscles of fire and steel which had no match in all Napoleon's mighty host? They smiled at me. They cheered me. The Emperor laughed and bowed. But to me the present was a dim dream, and what was real were my eight hundred dead Hussars and the Etienne of long ago. Enough—a brave

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man can face age and fate as he faced Cossacks and Uhlans. But there are times when Montrachet is better than the wine of Bordeaux.

It is to Russia that they go, and so I will tell you a story of Russia. Ah, what an evil dream of the night it seems! Blood and ice. Ice and blood. Fierce faces with snow upon the whiskers. Blue hands held out for succour. And across the great white plain the one long black line of moving figures, trudging, trudging, a hundred miles, another hundred, and still always the same white plain. Sometimes there were fir-woods to limit it, sometimes



"THEY WERE THE COSSACKS, WHO HUNG ROUND US LIKE WOLVES ROUND THE FLOCK."

it stretched away to the cold blue sky, but the black line stumbled on and on. Those weary, ragged, starving men, the spirit frozen out of them, looked neither to right nor left, but with sunken faces and rounded backs trailed onwards and ever onwards, making for France as wounded beasts make for their lair. There was no speaking, and you could scarce hear the shuffle of feet in the snow. Once only I heard them laugh. It was outside Wilna, when an aide-de-camp rode up to the head of that dreadful column and asked if that were the Grand Army. All who were within hearing looked round, and when they saw those broken men, those ruined regiments, those fur-capped skeletons who were once the Guard, they laughed, and the laugh crackled down the column like a *feu de joie*. I have heard many a groan and cry and scream in my life, but nothing so terrible as the laugh of the Grand Army.

But why was it that these helpless men were not destroyed by the Russians? Why was it that they were not speared by the Cossacks or herded into droves, and driven as prisoners into the heart of Russia? On every side as you watched the black snake winding over the snow you saw also dark, moving shadows which came and went like cloud drifts on either flank and behind. They were the Cossacks, who hung round us like wolves round the flock. But the reason why they did not ride in upon us was that all the ice of Russia could not cool the hot hearts of some of our soldiers. To the end there were always those who were ready to throw themselves between these savages and their prey. One man above all rose greater as the danger thickened, and won a higher name amid disaster than he had done when he led our van to victory. To him I drink this glass—to Ney, the red-maned Lion, glaring back over his shoulder at the enemy who feared to tread too closely on his heels. I can see him now, his broad white face convulsed with fury, his light blue eyes sparkling like flints, his great voice roaring and crashing amid the roll of the musketry. His glazed and featherless cocked hat was the ensign upon which France rallied during those dreadful days.

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It is well known that neither I nor the regiment of Hussars of Conflans were at Moscow. We were left behind on the lines of communication at Borodino. How the Emperor could have advanced without us is incomprehensible to me, and, indeed, it was only then that I understood that his judgment was weakening and that he was no longer the man that he had been. However, a soldier has to obey orders, and so I remained at this village, which was poisoned by the bodies of thirty thousand men who had lost their lives in the great battle. I spent the late autumn in getting my horses into condition and re-clothing my men, so that when the army fell back on Borodino my Hussars were the best of the cavalry, and were placed under Ney in the rear-guard. What could he have done without us during those dreadful days? "Ah, Gerard," said he one evening—but it is not for me to repeat the words. Suffice it that he spoke what the whole army felt. The rear-guard covered the army and the Hussars of Conflans covered the rear-guard. There was the whole truth in a sentence. Always the Cossacks were on us. Always we held them off. Never a day passed that we had not to wipe our sabres. That was soldiering indeed.

But there came a time between Wilna and Smolensk when the situation became impossible. Cossacks and even cold we could fight, but we could not fight hunger as well. Food must be got at all costs. That night Ney sent for me to the waggon in which he slept. His great head was sunk on his hands. Mind and body he was wearied to death.

"Colonel Gerard," said he, "things are going very badly with us. The men are starving. We must have food at all costs."

"The horses," I suggested.

"Save your handful of cavalry there are none left."

"The band," said I.

He laughed, even in his despair.

"Why the band?" he asked.

"Fighting men are of value."

"Good," said he. "You would play the game down to the last card and so would I. Good, Gerard, good!" He clasped my hand in his. "But there is one chance for us yet, Gerard." He unhooked a lantern from the roof of the waggon and he laid it on a map which was stretched before him. "To the south of us," said he, "there lies the town of Minsk. I have word from a Russian deserter that much corn has been stored in the town-hall. I wish you to take as many men as you think best, set forth for Minsk, seize the corn, load any carts which you may collect in the town, and bring them to me between here and Smolensk. If you fail it is but a detachment cut off. If you succeed it is new life to the army."

He had not expressed himself well, for it was evident that if we failed it was not merely the loss of a detachment. It is quality as well as quantity which counts. And yet how honourable a mission and how glorious a risk! If mortal men could bring it, then the corn should come from Minsk. I said so, and spoke a few burning words about a brave man's duty until the Marshal was so moved that he rose and, taking me affectionately by the shoulders, pushed me out of the waggon.

It was clear to me that in order to succeed in my enterprise I should take a small force and depend rather upon surprise than upon numbers. A large body could not conceal itself, would have great difficulty in getting food, and would cause all the Russians around us to concentrate for its certain destruction. On the other hand, if a small body of cavalry could get past the Cossacks unseen it was probable that they would find no troops to oppose them, for we knew that the main Russian army was several days' march behind us. This corn was meant, no doubt, for their consumption. A squadron of Hussars and thirty Polish Lancers were all whom I chose for the venture. That very night we rode out of the camp, and struck south in the direction of Minsk.

Fortunately there was but a half moon, and we were able to pass without being attacked by the enemy. Twice we saw great fires burning amid the snow, and around them a thick bristle of long poles. These were the lances of Cossacks, which they had stood upright while they slept. It would have been a great joy to us to have charged in amongst them, for we had much to revenge, and the eyes of my comrades looked longingly from me to those red flickering patches in the darkness. My faith, I was sorely tempted to do it, for it would have been a good lesson to teach them that they must keep a few miles between themselves and a French army. It is the essence of good generalship, however, to keep one thing before one at a time, and so we rode silently on through the snow, leaving these Cossack bivouacs to right and left. Behind us the black sky was all mottled with a line of flame which showed where our own poor wretches were trying to keep themselves alive for another day of misery and starvation.

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All night we rode slowly onwards, keeping our horses' tails to the Pole Star. There were many tracks in the snow, and we kept to the line of these, that no one might remark that a body of cavalry had passed that way. These are the little precautions which mark the experienced officer. Besides, by keeping to the tracks we were most likely to find the villages, and only in the villages could we hope to get food. The dawn of day found us in a thick fir-wood, the trees so loaded with snow that the light could hardly reach us. When we had found our way out of it it was full daylight, the rim of the rising sun peeping over the edge of the great snow-plain and turning it crimson from end to end. I halted my Hussars and Lancers under the shadow of the wood, and I studied the country. Close to us there was a small farmhouse. Beyond, at the distance of several miles, was a village. Far away on the sky-line rose a considerable town all bristling with church towers. This must be Minsk. In no direction could I see any signs of troops. It was evident that we had passed through the Cossacks and that there was nothing between us and our goal. A joyous shout burst from my men when I told them our position, and we advanced rapidly towards the village.

I have said, however, that there was a small farmhouse immediately in front of us. As we rode up to it I observed that a fine grey horse with a military saddle was tethered by the door. Instantly I galloped forwards, but before I could reach it a man dashed out of the door, flung himself on to the horse, and rode furiously away, the crisp, dry snow flying up in a cloud behind him. The sunlight gleamed upon his gold epaulettes, and I knew that he was a Russian officer. He would raise the whole countryside if we did not catch him. I put spurs to Violette and flew after him. My troopers followed; but there was no horse among them to compare with Violette, and I knew well that if I could not catch the Russian I need expect no help from them.

But it is a swift horse indeed and a skilful rider who can hope to escape from Violette with Etienne Gerard in the saddle. He rode well, this young Russian, and his mount was a good one, but gradually we wore him down. His face glanced continually over his shoulder—a dark, handsome face, with eyes like an eagle—and I saw as I closed with him that he was measuring the distance between us. Suddenly he half turned; there were a flash and a crack as his pistol bullet hummed past my ear. Before he could draw his sword I was upon him; but he still spurred his horse, and the two galloped together over the plain, I with my leg against the Russian's and my left hand upon his right shoulder. I saw his hand fly up to his mouth. Instantly I dragged him across my pommel and seized him by the throat, so that he could not swallow. His horse shot from under him, but I held him fast and Violette came to a stand. Sergeant Oudin of the Hussars was the first to join us. He was an old soldier, and he saw at a glance what I was after.

"Hold tight, Colonel," said he, "I'll do the rest."

He slipped out his knife, thrust the blade between the clenched teeth of the Russian, and turned it so as to force his mouth open. There, on his tongue, was the little wad of wet paper which he had been so anxious to swallow. Oudin picked it out and I let go of the man's throat. From the way in which, half strangled as he was, he glanced at the paper I was sure that it was a message of extreme importance. His hands twitched as if he longed to snatch it from me. He shrugged his shoulders, however, and smiled good-humouredly when I apologized for my roughness.

"And now to business," said I, when he had done coughing and hawking. "What is your name?"

"Alexis Barakoff."

"Your rank and regiment?"

"Captain of the Dragoons of Grodno."

"What is this note which you were carrying?"

"It is a line which I had written to my sweetheart."

"Whose name," said I, examining the address, "is the Hetman Platoff. Come, come, sir, this is an important military document, which you are carrying from one general to another. Tell me this instant what it is."

"Read it and then you will know." He spoke perfect French, as do most of the educated Russians. But he knew well that there is not one French officer in a thousand who knows a word of Russian. The inside of the note contained one single line, which ran like this:—

"Pustj Franzuzy pridutt v Minsk. Min gotovy."

I stared at it, and I had to shake my head. Then I showed it to my Hussars, but they could make nothing of it. The Poles were all rough fellows who could not read or write, save only the sergeant, who came from

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Memel, in East Prussia, and knew no Russian. It was maddening, for I felt that I had possession of some important secret upon which the safety of the army might depend, and yet I could make no sense of it. Again I entreated our prisoner to translate it, and offered him his freedom if he would do so. He only smiled at my request. I could not but admire him, for it was the very smile which I should have myself smiled had I been in his position.

"At least," said I, "tell us the name of this village."

"It is Dobrova."

"And that is Minsk over yonder, I suppose?"

"Yes, that is Minsk."

"Then we shall go to the village and we shall very soon find someone who will translate this despatch."



"WE SHALL VERY SOON FIND SOMEONE WHO WILL TRANSLATE THIS DESPATCH."

So we rode onward together, a trooper with his carbine unslung on either side of our prisoner. The village was but a little place, and I set a guard at the ends of the single street, so that no one could escape from it. It was necessary to call a halt and to find some food for the men and horses, since they had travelled all night and had a long journey still before them.

There was one large stone house in the centre of the village, and to this I rode. It was the house of the priest—a snuffy and ill-favoured old man who had not a civil answer to any of our questions. An uglier fellow I never met, but, my faith, it was very different with his only daughter, who kept house for him. She was a brunette, a rare thing in Russia, with creamy skin, raven hair, and a pair of the most glorious dark eyes that ever kindled at the sight of a Hussar. From the first glance I saw that she was mine. It was no time for love-making when a soldier's duty had to be done, but still, as I took the simple meal which they laid before me, I chatted lightly with the lady, and we were the best of friends before an hour had passed. Sophie was her first name, her second I never knew. I taught her to call me Etienne, and I tried to cheer her up, for her sweet face was sad and there were tears in her beautiful dark eyes. I pressed her to tell me what it was which was grieving her.

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"How can I be otherwise," said she, speaking French with a most adorable lisp, "when one of my poor countrymen is a prisoner in your hands? I saw him between two of your Hussars as you rode into the village."

"It is the fortune of war," said I. "His turn to-day; mine, perhaps, to-morrow."

"But consider, Monsieur——" said she.

"Etienne," said I.

"Oh, Monsieur——"

"Etienne," said I.

"Well, then," she cried, beautifully flushed and desperate, "consider, Etienne, that this young officer will be taken back to your army and will be starved or frozen, for if, as I hear, your own soldiers have a hard march, what will be the lot of a prisoner?"

I shrugged my shoulders.

"You have a kind face, Etienne," said she; "you would not condemn this poor man to certain death. I entreat you to let him go."

Her delicate hand rested upon my sleeve, her dark eyes looked imploringly into mine.

A sudden thought passed through my mind. I would grant her request, but I would demand a favour in return. At my order the prisoner was brought up into the room.

"Captain Barakoff," said I, "this young lady has begged me to release you, and I am inclined to do so. I would ask you to give your parole that you will remain in this dwelling for twenty-four hours, and take no steps to inform anyone of our movements."

"I will do so," said he.

"Then I trust in your honour. One man more or less can make no difference in a struggle between great armies, and to take you back as a prisoner would be to condemn you to death. Depart, sir, and show your gratitude not to me, but to the first French officer who falls into your hands."

When he was gone I drew my paper from my pocket.

"Now, Sophie," said I, "I have done what you asked me, and all that I ask in return is that you will give me a lesson in Russian."

"With all my heart," said she.



"'LET US BEGIN ON THIS,' SAID I."

"Let us begin on this," said I, spreading out the paper before her. "Let us take it word for word and see what it means."

She looked at the writing with some surprise. "It means," said she, "if the French come to Minsk all is lost." Suddenly a look of consternation passed over her beautiful face. "Great heavens!" she cried, "what is it that I have done? I have betrayed my country!

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Oh, Etienne, your eyes are the last for whom this message is meant. How could you be so cunning as to make a poor, simple-minded, and unsuspecting girl betray the cause of her country?"

I consoled my poor Sophie as best I might, and I assured her that it was no reproach to her that she should be outwitted by so old a campaigner and so shrewd a man as myself. But it was no time now for talk. This message made it clear that the corn was indeed at Minsk, and that there were no troops there to defend it. I gave a hurried order from the window, the trumpeter blew the assembly, and in ten minutes we had left the village behind us and were riding hard for the city, the gilded domes and minarets of which glimmered above the snow of the horizon. Higher they rose and higher, until at last, as the sun sank towards the west, we were in the broad main street, and galloped up it amid the shouts of the moujiks and the cries of frightened women until we found ourselves in front of the great town-hall. My cavalry I drew up in the square, and I, with my two sergeants, Oudin and Papilette, rushed into the building.

Heavens! shall I ever forget the sight which greeted us? Right in front of us was drawn up a triple line of Russian Grenadiers. Their muskets rose as we entered, and a crashing volley burst into our very faces. Oudin and Papilette dropped upon the floor, riddled with bullets. For myself, my busby was shot away and I had two holes through my dolman. The Grenadiers ran at me with their bayonets. "Treason!" I cried. "We are betrayed! Stand to your horses!" I rushed out of the hall, but the whole square was swarming with troops. From every side street Dragoons and Cossacks were riding down upon us, and such a rolling fire had burst from the surrounding houses that half my men and horses were on the ground. "Follow me!" I yelled, and sprang upon Violette, but a giant of a Russian Dragoon officer threw his arms round me and we rolled on the ground together. He shortened his sword to kill me, but, changing his mind, he seized me by the throat and banged my head against the stones until I was unconscious. So it was that I became the prisoner of the Russians.

When I came to myself my only regret was that my captor had not beaten out my brains. There in the grand square of Minsk lay half my troopers dead or wounded, with exultant crowds of Russians gathered round them. The rest in a melancholy group were herded into the porch of the town-hall, a sotnia of Cossacks keeping guard over them. Alas! what could I say, what could I do? It was evident that I had led my men into a carefully-baited trap. They had heard of our mission and they had prepared for us. And yet there was that despatch which had caused me to neglect all precautions and to ride straight into the town. How was I to account for that? The tears ran down my cheeks as I surveyed the ruin of my squadron, and as I thought of the plight of my comrades of the Grand Army who awaited the food which I was to have brought them. Ney had trusted me and I had failed him. How often he would strain his eyes over the snowfields for that convoy of grain which should never gladden his sight! My own fate was hard enough. An exile in Siberia was the best which the future could bring me. But you will believe me, my friends, that it was not for his own sake, but for that of his starving comrades, that Etienne Gerard's cheeks were lined by his tears, frozen even as they were shed.

"What's this?" said a gruff voice at my elbow; and I turned to face the huge, black-bearded Dragoon who had dragged me from my saddle. "Look at the Frenchman crying! I thought that the Corsican was followed by brave men and not by children."

"If you and I were face to face and alone, I should let you see which is the better man," said I.

For answer the brute struck me across the face with his open hand. I seized him by the throat, but a dozen of his soldiers tore me away from him, and he struck me again while they held my hands.

"You base hound," I cried, "is this the way to treat an officer and a gentleman?"

"We never asked you to come to Russia," said he. "If you do you must take such treatment as you can get. I would shoot you off hand if I had my way."

"You will answer for this some day," I cried, as I wiped the blood from my moustache.

"If the Hetman Platoff is of my way of thinking you will not be alive this time to-morrow," he answered, with a ferocious scowl. He added some words in Russian to his troops, and instantly they all sprang to their saddles. Poor Violette, looking as miserable as her master, was led round and I was told to mount her. My left arm was tied with a thong which was fastened to the stirrup-iron of a sergeant of Dragoons. So in most sorry plight I and the remnant of my men set forth from Minsk.

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Never have I met such a brute as this man Sergine, who commanded the escort. The Russian army contains the best and the worst in the world, but a worse than Major Sergine of the Dragoons of Kieff I have never seen in any force outside of the guerillas of the Peninsula. He was a man of great stature, with a fierce, hard face and a bristling black beard, which fell over his cuirass. I have been told since that he was noted for his strength and his bravery, and I could answer for it that he had the grip of a bear, for I had felt it when he tore me from my saddle. He was a wit, too, in his way, and made continual remarks in Russian at our expense which set all his Dragoons and Cossacks laughing. Twice he beat my comrades with his riding-whip, and once he approached me with the lash swung over his shoulder, but there was something in my eyes which prevented it from falling. So in misery and humiliation, cold and starving, we rode in a disconsolate column across the vast snow-plain. The sun had sunk, but still in the long northern twilight we pursued our weary journey. Numbed and frozen, with my head aching from the blows it had received, I was borne onwards by Violette, hardly conscious of where I was or whither I was going. The little mare walked with a sunken head, only raising it to snort her contempt for the mangy Cossack ponies who were round her.

But suddenly the escort stopped, and I found that we had halted in the single street of a small Russian village. There was a church on one side, and on the other was a large stone house, the outline of which seemed to me to be familiar. I looked around me in the twilight, and then I saw that we had been led back to Dobrova, and that this house at the door of which we were waiting was the same house of the priest at which we had stopped in the morning. Here it was that my charming Sophie in her innocence had translated the unlucky message which had in some strange way led us to our ruin. To think that only a few hours before we had left this very spot with such high hopes and all fair prospects for our mission, and now the remnants of us waited as beaten and humiliated men for whatever lot a brutal enemy might ordain! But such is the fate of the soldier, my friends—kisses to-day, blows to-morrow, Tokay in a palace, ditch-water in a hovel, furs or rags, a full purse or an empty pocket, ever swaying from the best to the worst, with only his courage and his honour unchanging.

The Russian horsemen dismounted, and my poor fellows were ordered to do the same. It was already late, and it was clearly their intention to spend the night in this village. There were great cheering and joy amongst the peasants when they understood that we had all been taken, and they flocked out of their houses with flaming torches, the women carrying out tea and brandy for the Cossacks. Amongst others the old priest came forth—the same whom we had seen in the morning. He was all smiles now, and he bore with him some hot punch on a salver, the reek of which I can remember still. Behind her father was Sophie. With horror I saw her clasp Major Sergine's hand as she congratulated him upon the victory he had won and the prisoners he had made. The old priest, her father, looked at me with an insolent face and made insulting remarks at my expense, pointing at me with his lean and grimy hand. His fair daughter Sophie looked at me also, but she said nothing, and I could read her tender pity in her dark eyes. At last she turned to Major Sergine and said something to him in Russian, on which he frowned and shook his head impatiently. She appeared to plead with him, standing there in the flood of light which shone from the open door of her father's house. My eyes were fixed upon the two faces, that of the beautiful girl and of the dark, fierce man, for my instinct told me that it was my own fate which was under debate. For a long time the soldier shook his head, and then, at last softening before her pleadings, he appeared to give way. He turned to where I stood with my guardian sergeant beside me.

"These good people offer you the shelter of their roof for the night," said he to me, looking me up and down with vindictive eyes. "I find it hard to refuse them, but I tell you straight that for my part I had rather see you on the snow. It would cool your hot blood, you rascal of a Frenchman!"

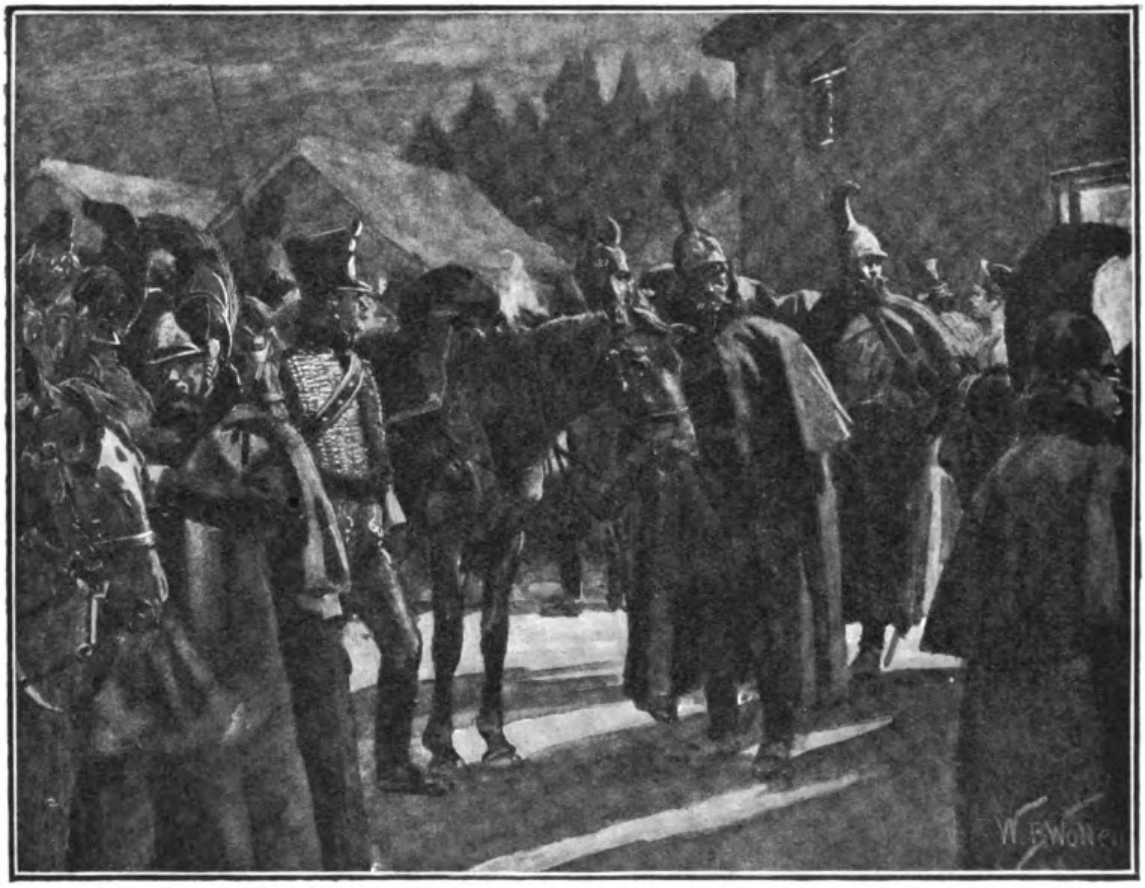
I looked at him with the contempt that I felt.

"You were born a savage and you will die one," said I.

My words stung him, for he broke into an oath, raising his whip as if he would strike me.

"Silence, you crop-eared dog!" he cried. "Had I my way some of the insolence would be frozen out of you before morning." Mastering his passion, he turned upon Sophie with what he meant to be a gallant manner. "If you have a cellar with a good lock," said he, "the fellow may lie in it for the night,

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"MY EYES WERE FIXED UPON THE TWO FACES."

since you have done him the honour to take an interest in his comfort. I must have his parole that he will not attempt to play us any tricks, as I am answerable for him until I hand him over to the Hetman Platoff to-morrow."

His supercilious manner was more than I could endure. He had evidently spoken French to the lady in order that I might understand the humiliating way in which he referred to me.

"I will take no favour from you," said I. "You may do what you like, but I will never give you my parole."

The Russian shrugged his great shoulders, and turned away as if the matter were ended.

"Very well, my fine fellow, so much the worse for your fingers and toes. We shall see how you are in the morning after a night in the snow."

"One moment, Major Sergine," cried Sophie. "You must not be so hard upon this prisoner. There are some special reasons why he has a claim upon our kindness and mercy."

The Russian looked with suspicion upon his face from her to me.

"What are the special reasons? You certainly seem to take a remarkable interest in this Frenchman," said he.

"The chief reason is that he has this very morning of his own accord released Captain Alexis Barakoff, of the Dragoons of Grodno."

"It is true," said Barakoff, who had come out of the house. "He captured me this morning, and he released me upon parole rather than take me back to the French army, where I should have been starved."

"Since Colonel Gerard has acted so generously you will surely, now that fortune has changed, allow us to offer him the poor shelter of our cellar upon this bitter night," said Sophie. "It is a small return for his generosity."

But the Dragoon was still in the sulks.

"Let him give me his parole first that he will not attempt to escape," said he. "Do you hear, sir? Do you give me your parole?"

"I give you nothing," said I.

"Colonel Gerard," cried Sophie, turning to me with a coaxing smile, "you will give *me* your parole, will you not?"

"To you, mademoiselle, I can refuse nothing. I will give you my parole, with pleasure."

"There, Major Sergine," cried Sophie, in

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triumph, "that is surely sufficient. You have heard him say that he gives me his parole. I will be answerable for his safety."

In an ungracious fashion my Russian bear grunted his consent, and so I was led into the house, followed by the scowling father and by the big, black-bearded Dragoon. In the basement there was a large and roomy chamber, where the winter logs were stored. Thither it was that I was led, and I was given to understand that this was to be my lodging for the night. One side of this bleak apartment was heaped up to the ceiling with fagots of firewood. The rest of the room was stone-flagged and bare-walled, with a single, deep-set window upon one side, which was safely guarded with iron bars. For light I had a large stable lantern, which swung from a beam of the low ceiling. Major Sergine smiled as he took this down, and swung it round so as to throw its light into every corner of that dreary chamber.

"How do you like our Russian hotels, monsieur?" he asked, with his hateful sneer. "They are not very grand, but they are the best that we can give you. Perhaps the next time that you Frenchmen take a fancy to travel you will choose some other country where they will make you more comfortable." He stood laughing at me, his white teeth gleaming through his beard. Then he left me, and I heard the great key creak in the lock.

For an hour of utter misery, chilled in body and soul, I sat upon a pile of fagots, my face sunk upon my hands and my mind full of the saddest thoughts. It was cold enough within those four walls, but I thought of the sufferings of my poor troopers outside, and I sorrowed with their sorrow. Then I paced up and down, and I clapped my hands together and kicked my feet against the walls to keep them from being frozen. The lamp gave out some warmth, but still it was bitterly cold, and I had had no food since morning. It seemed to me that everyone had forgotten me, but at last I heard the key turn in the lock, and who should enter but my prisoner of the morning, Captain Alexis Barakoff. A bottle of wine projected from under his arm, and he carried a great plate of hot stew in front of him.

"Hush!" said he; "not a word! Keep up your heart! I cannot stop to explain, for Sergine is still with us. Keep awake and ready!" With these hurried words he laid down the welcome food and ran out of the room.

"Keep awake and ready!" The words rang in my ears. I ate my food and I drank my wine, but it was neither food nor wine which had warmed the heart within me. What could those words of Barakoff mean? Why was I to remain awake? For what was I to be ready? Was it possible that there was a chance yet of escape? I have never respected the man who neglects his prayers at all other times and yet prays when he is in peril. It is like a bad soldier who pays no respect to the colonel save when he would demand a favour of him. And yet when I thought of the salt-mines of Siberia on the one side and of my mother in France upon the other, I could not help a prayer rising, not from my lips, but from my heart, that the words of Barakoff might mean all that I hoped. But hour after hour struck upon the village clock, and still I heard nothing save the call of the Russian sentries in the street outside.

Then at last my heart leaped within me, for I heard a light step in the passage. An instant later the key turned, the door opened, and Sophie was in the room.

"Monsieur——" she cried.

"Etienne," said I.

"Nothing will change you," said she. "But is it possible that you do not hate me? Have you forgiven me the trick which I played you?"

"What trick?" I asked.

"Good heavens! is it possible that even now you have not understood it? You have asked me to translate the despatch. I have told you that it meant, 'If the French come to Minsk all is lost.'"

"What did it mean, then?"

"It means, 'Let the French come to Minsk. We are awaiting them.'"

I sprang back from her.

"You betrayed me!" I cried. "You lured me into this trap. It is to you that I owe the death and capture of my men. Fool that I was to trust a woman!"

"Do not be unjust, Colonel Gerard. I am a Russian woman, and my first duty is to my country. Would you not wish a French girl to have acted as I have done? Had I translated the message correctly you would not have gone to Minsk and your squadron would have escaped. Tell me that you forgive me!"

She looked bewitching as she stood pleading her cause in front of me. And yet, as I thought of my dead men, I could not take the hand which she held out to me.

"Very good," said she, as she dropped it by her side. "You feel for your own people and I feel for mine, and so we are equal.

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But you have said one wise and kindly thing within these walls, Colonel Gerard. You have said, 'One man more or less can make no difference in a struggle between two great armies.' Your lesson of nobility is not wasted. Behind those fagots is an unguarded door. Here is the key to it. Go forth, Colonel Gerard, and I trust that we may never look upon each other's faces again."



"BEHIND THOSE FAGOTS IS AN UNGUARDED DOOR."

I stood for an instant with the key in my hand and my head in a whirl. Then I handed it back to her.

"I cannot do it," I said.

"Why not?"

"I have given my parole."

"To whom?" she asked.

"Why, to you!"

"And I release you from it."

My heart bounded with joy. Of course, it was true what she said. I had refused to give my parole to Sergine. I owed him no duty. If she relieved me from my promise my honour was clear. I took the key from her hand.

"You will find Captain Barakoff at the end of the village street," said she. "We of the North never forget either an injury or a kindness. He has your mare and your sword waiting for you. Do not delay an instant, for in two hours it will be dawn."

So I passed out into the starlit Russian night, and had that last glimpse of Sophie as she peered after me through the open door. She looked wistfully at me as if she expected something more than the cold thanks which I gave her, but even the humblest man has his pride, and I will not deny that mine was hurt by the deception which she had played upon me. I could not have brought myself to kiss her hand, far less her lips. The door led into a narrow alley, and at the end of it stood a muffled figure who held Violette by the bridle.

"You told me to be kind to the next French officer whom I found in distress," said he. "Good luck! Bon voyage!" he whispered, as I bounded into the saddle. "Remember, 'Poltava' is the watchword."

It was well that he had given it to me, for twice I had to pass Cossack pickets before I was clear of the lines. I had just ridden past the last vedettes and hoped that I was a free man again when there was a soft thudding in the snow behind me, and a heavy man upon a great black horse came swiftly after me. My first impulse was to put spurs to Violette. My second, as I saw

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a long black beard against a steel cuirass, was to halt and await him.

"I thought that it was you, you dog of a Frenchman," he cried, shaking his drawn sword at me. "So you have broken your parole, you rascal!"

"I gave no parole."

"You lie, you hound!"

I looked around and no one was coming. The vedettes were motionless and distant. We were all alone, with the moon above and the snow beneath. Fortune has ever been my friend.

"I gave you no parole."



"THE WORDS WERE HIS DEATH-WARRANT."

"You gave it to the lady."

"Then I will answer for it to the lady."

"That would suit you better, no doubt. But, unfortunately, you will have to answer for it to me."

"I am ready."

"Your sword, too! There is treason in this! Ah, I see it all! The woman has helped you. She shall see Siberia for this night's work."

The words were his death-warrant. For Sophie's sake I could not let him go back alive. Our blades crossed, and an instant later mine was through his black beard and deep in his throat. I was on the ground almost as soon as he, but the one thrust was enough. He died, snapping his teeth at my ankles like a savage wolf.

Two days later I had rejoined the army at Smolensk, and was a part once more of that dreary procession which tramped onwards through the snow, leaving a long weal of blood to show the path which it had taken.

Enough, my friends; I would not re-awaken the memory of those days of misery and death. They still come to haunt me in my dreams. When we halted at last in Warsaw we had left behind us our guns, our transport, three-fourths of our comrades. But we did not leave behind us the honour of Etienne Gerard. They have said that I broke my parole. Let them beware how they say it to my face, for the story is as I tell it, and old as I am my forefinger is not too weak to press a trigger when my honour is in question.

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The Panels in Sir Lawrence Alma-Tadema's Hall.

By Rudolph de Cordova.

From Photos. by George Newnes, Limited.

UNIQUE in London, unique indeed in the world, is the hall which—by the kindness of Sir Lawrence Alma-Tadema and his artist friends, to whom I desire to express my warmest acknowledgments for their kindness in permitting the pictures to be reproduced—forms the subject of this article.

There are many halls whose walls are graced by valuable paintings, some of which may be, and undoubtedly are, the gifts of artist friends. No other hall, however, is entirely adorned by the gift of brother artists whose work has been specially designed and executed for a certain definite place and no other; for each picture was painted to fill its own particular niche in the wall of the house beautiful at St. John's Wood where Sir Lawrence Alma-Tadema lives.

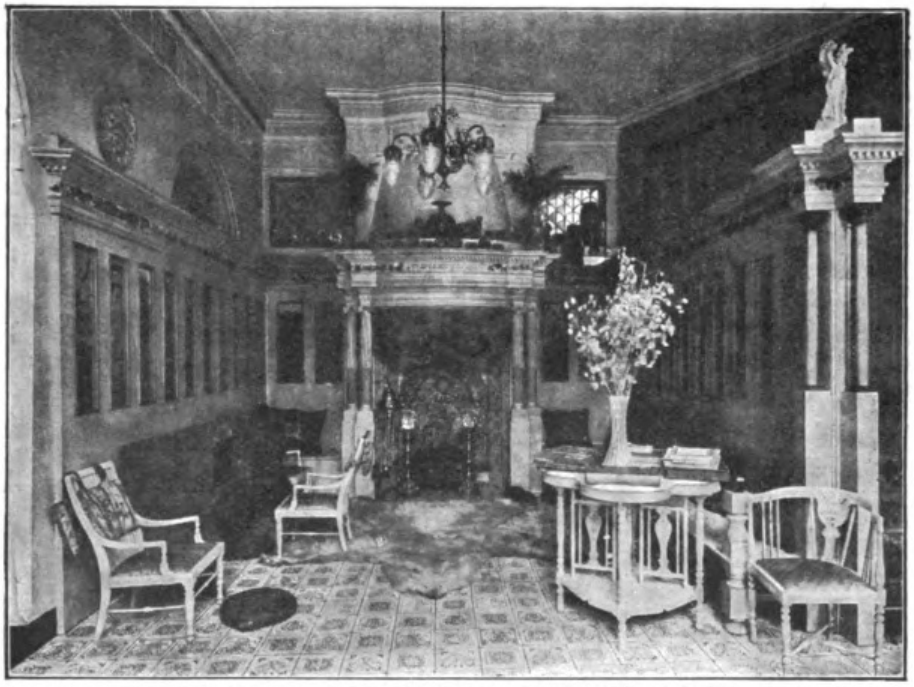
Well may he inscribe, as he has done, over the mantelpiece of that hall the words:—

> I count myself in nothing else so happy
> As in a soul remembering my good friends.
> —*Richard the Second.*

for the feeling which those friends have for him it has been my privilege to discover in the communion which the preparation of this article has given me with the painters. It must be added that in most cases no titles are attached to the panels, and those given here are merely intended to indicate the subjects.

Some idea of the enthusiasm with which the work was undertaken, as well as the conditions under which it was done, may be gathered from the incident connected with the painting of the panel of Mr. G. H. Boughton, R.A.

Sir Lawrence and Lady Alma-Tadema gave a party one evening at which Mr. Boughton was present. Incidentally the spaces for the panels were shown, many of them already filled with pictures. Over Mr. Boughton there crept a feeling of intense sadness at the thought of being



THE HALL OF SIR LAWRENCE ALMA-TADEMA'S HOUSE.

"left out," as he described it to me, and he turned to Sir Lawrence and inquired what he had done that he had not been asked to fill one of the empty spaces. "My dear George," said Sir Lawrence, "no one has been asked. These are all 'volunteers' that you see here."

"Am I in time?" asked Mr. Boughton.

"That little space is waiting for you," said Sir Lawrence, indicating it.

The next moment Sir Lawrence had to furnish a foot-rule, with which Mr. Boughton measured the length and breadth of the panel he had to fill.

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"THE SLEEP-WALKER." By G. Pope. "A JAVANESE GIRL." By John J. Sargent, R.A. "READY FOR A RIDE." By G. H. Boughton, R.A.

It will be noticed in the illustrations that that is the shortest panel of all, and does not completely fill the space. The reason is that in the empty place a barometer is fixed when the pictures are in position, for they had all to be removed to be specially photographed for this article.

The finding of a subject for a tall, narrow space is declared by all the artists to have been by no means an easy matter. Indeed, the panel form in painting might not inaptly be likened to the sonnet form in poetry, and everyone knows how difficult that is. Mr. Boughton solved his problem with a tall young horsewoman, in the riding-dress of a hundred years ago, standing on an old-time mounting-stone, but the difficulty has been characteristically and, if I may permit myself to voice the opinion of Sir Lawrence himself, brilliantly overcome in every case.

The panels are uniformly 31½in. high, but they vary in breadth from about 2½in. in the case of that painted by Miss Alma-Tadema to about 8in. in that painted by Mr. Marcus Stone, R.A.

Mr. John J. Sargent's panel, which is inscribed "To my friend Alma-Tadema," is a reminiscence of the Javanese dancers who created so great a sensation at the Paris Exhibition in 1889. These girls used to paint their faces, their arms, and the exposed portions of their bodies a bright yellow colour, and this Mr. Sargent has faithfully done, with a most remarkable result. Later on, the girls, presuming on their vogue, declined to paint in their characteristic fashion, with the result that in a very little while they lost the attraction they possessed.

"The Sleep-Walker" is the subject of Mr. Gustave Pope's picture, and it will be noticed that he differs in his treatment of it from

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"A LANDSCAPE." By David Murray, A.R.A.

"AN INDIAN GIRL." By Val Prinsep, R.A.

"A SEASCAPE." By H. Moore, A.R.A.

Shakespeare, who made Lady Macbeth walk with her eyes open, though "their sense was shut." Mr. Pope's peaceful figure, however, does not in any way suggest the guilty wife of him who was Thane of Glamis and of Cawdor; and further evidence that he had no idea of illustrating that scene is furnished by the fact that she is carrying in her hand a candlestick of modern date instead of a mediæval lamp.

Mr. Val Prinsep's panel represents an Indian girl going down the sacred steps to the Ganges to fill her pitchers with water. The study was made when he went to India to paint his great picture of the proclamation of Queen Victoria as Empress of India.

No one looking at Mr. Henry Moore's contribution could fail to recognise that it was a moonlight scene, as it would be impossible to fail to get the feeling of evening in the landscape of Mr. David Murray.

The difficulty of finding a subject was humorously suggested by the late Lord Leighton, who offered to paint a panel. Sir Lawrence sent him the dimensions. A few days after they met at dinner at the house of a mutual friend. They were sitting directly opposite one another, and, picking up a long, narrow-bladed dessert knife, Lord Leighton turned to his comrade in art and said: "My dear Tadema, what sort of a subject do you expect me to paint on this?"

It was not long, however, before he found the answer himself. Everyone will recognise the resemblance to Lord Leighton's famous picture, "The Bath of Psyche." From this panel, indeed, he painted that picture. Recognising, however, that the idea of the subject belonged to his friend, Lord Leighton first went to him and asked whether he had any objection to his working it out again in

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"A SCENE IN IRELAND." By Sir E. Waterlow, A.R.A.

"THE BATH OF PSYCHE." By Lord Leighton, P.R.A.

"PEACE." By Andrew C. Gow, R.A.

another way. Naturally Sir Lawrence gracefully acquiesced in the idea, and, cutting away the reflection in the water and elaborating the columns, the late President of the Academy produced a picture which in its many reproduced forms has had an extraordinary vogue. For permission to reproduce it, as well as Mr. Marcus Stone's panel, I am indebted to the Berlin Photographic Company, Ltd., and to Messrs. Henry Graves and Co., Ltd., for the use of "Andromeda."

Sir E. Waterlow's landscape represents a scene in Ireland, and his admirers will have no difficulty in recognising his characteristic touch.

Mr. Andrew Gow's typical panel of a Royalist gentleman with a little boy before him on the horse, which is quietly drinking at the stream, takes the mind back to the days when "Civil blood made civil hands unclean." It represents the happy termination of the war between King Charles and the soldiers of the Commonwealth, for Mr. Gow intended to call it "Peace."

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"TEMPLE AT PHILÆ." By Hon. J. Collier.

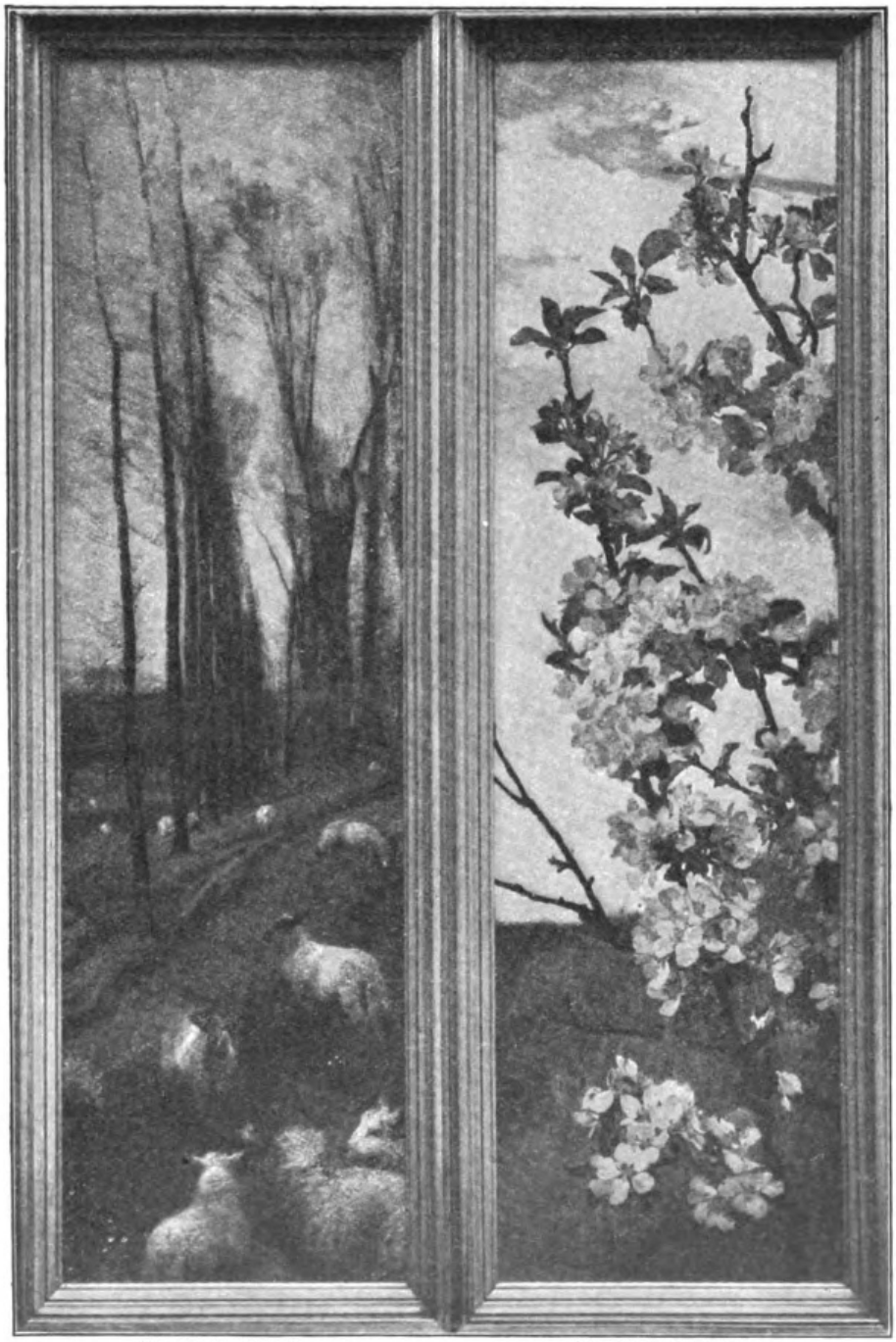
"CHERRY GARDEN STAIRS." By Charles Wyllie.

"A BIT OF OLD HAMPSTEAD." By Charles Green, R.I.

The spirit of the East breathes in the Hon. John Collier's picture, which represents a view of the interior of the great temple at Philæ.

It has been said, and said without fear of contradiction, that no one knows more about the life of the bargee than Mr. Charles Wyllie, if, indeed, anyone knows as much. He has very skilfully contrived to get a great reach of the Thames he loves so well into the narrow compass of his composition, for the distance between the barge in the foreground and the steamer in the background is fully two miles. The scene is really at Rotherhithe, and the building on the right is a public-house containing the captain's room described by the late Sir Walter Besant in his novel of that name. The stairs by it leading from the river to the land are "Cherry Garden Stairs," but the cherry gardens to which they led have long since departed, though in the old days men and women used to foregather in them. The scene depicted, however, may be witnessed

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"A LANDSCAPE."
By H. W. B. Davis, R.A.

"APPLE BLOSSOM."
By Alfred Parsons, A.R.A.

any warm Saturday afternoon in the summer, for the boys in the neighbourhood delight in bathing in the cool water, even though its appearance would not commend it to more fastidious mortals. They are not supposed to bathe without proper clothing, but many of them, it must be confessed, ignore this rule, and on the appearance of a policeman they scurry away carrying their street clothes in their arms. To appreciate the picture at its full it ought to be studied with a magnifying glass, when incident after incident will come in view — the mother with the baby in her arms and her daughter at her feet on the barge in front; the little lad leaning against the wall; and the bathers revelling in the cool water in the middle distance, while on the balcony of the house may be seen another woman holding up her baby to view the lively scene; and it hardly requires any imagination to fancy that in the happy throng below is the woman's husband, whom she is so intently watching.

A bit of old Hampstead which unfortunately no longer exists was the subject which inspired the late Charles Green—always "Charlie" to his intimates—with the subject of his picture. It was a standing joke of his that whenever he passed by that particular shop the barber was always standing in the doorway, and his wife was always watering the flowers out of the first-floor window. The subject lent itself so essentially to the peculiar treatment of the panels that he could not refrain from using it.

The panel of Mr. H. Davis, R.A., needs no word of explanation, nor did the work develop any incident which the artist recalls beyond the fact that it was painted from the grounds round the house in which he was living at the time in France.

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"CRUEL WINTER." By E. F. Brewtnall, R.W.S.

"THE PANEL-ROOM TOWNSHEND HOUSE." By Miss Hipkins.

The two panels of Mr. Alfred Parsons, the greatest flower painter in England, were painted some eighteen years ago at Stratford-on-Avon, and one is inscribed "To my friend Mrs. Alma-Tadema," while the other is "To my friend Alma-Tadema." Those were, of course, the days before Sir Lawrence Alma-Tadema was knighted, an event which led a lady to say to him with delightful *naïveté* one day, "I suppose, Sir Lawrence, now that you've been made a knight you'll leave off painting and live like a gentleman." Happily for art, however, he remains what he was before he "had it on the shoulder."

The possessors of an etching by Mr. Edward F. Brewtnall, R.W.S., called "Cruel Winter," will recognise in his picture a similar subject to the one he treated in that work. That etching was after a water-colour drawing hung at an exhibition of the Royal Society of Painters in Water Colours, and was the reason of his being elected a full member. The subject was suggested to him by a very severe winter, when many birds perished in the cold. Sensitive to all suffering as the artist always is, Mr. Brewtnall saw in the contrast between the young girl, warmly clad and ermine tippeted, and the stark, frozen figure of the dead sparrow that clash which is the essence of all drama. The expression of the girl as she contemplates that little tragedy is, it is safe to say, Mr. Brewtnall's own, for the fate of the birds is one in which he is deeply interested.

An interesting souvenir of Townshend House amongst the panels is the one painted by Miss Hipkins. It represents a view from the Gold Room into the Panel Room. The principal features are the sixteenth-century Antwerp window, now adorning the bedroom in that style, which forms the annexe to Lady Alma-Tadema's present studio, and the collection of blue and white, the remnant of that which decorated the house before the explosion of a gunpowder barge on the Regent's Canal, in front of Townshend House, on the 2nd of October, 1874.

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"FLAGS." By Miss Alma-Tadema.

"IN THE GARDEN." By Marcus Stone, R.A.

"A LANDSCAPE." By Mrs. R. Williams.

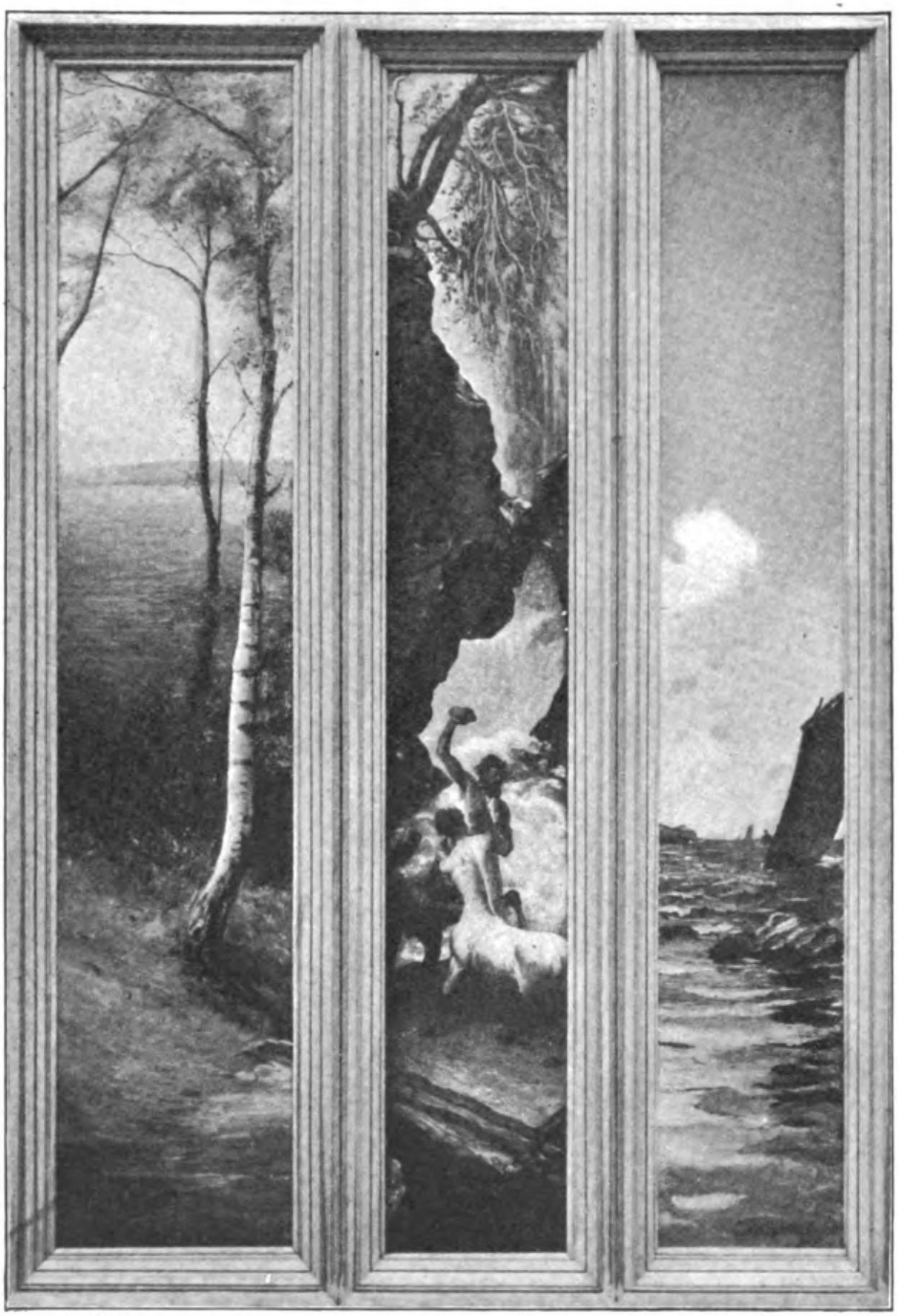
Miss Alma-Tadema's panel was a birthday gift to her father, and is a reminiscence of Queen Victoria's Jubilee. It consists of flags of various nations floating in the breeze and breathing the spirit of Robert Browning's line :—

The church spires flamed, such flags they had.

There is in it a conceit as beautiful as it is refined, which, unfortunately, the exigencies of reproduction render indistinct, but which may, nevertheless, be seen by careful observation. The lowermost flag is that of Holland, which no one needs reminding is the country of Sir Lawrence's birth. Adorning the flag is a laurel wreath surrounding the initials L. A. T., and the whole world has united with the country of his birth in offering him that recognised mark of greatest distinction.

Mr. Marcus Stone's panel has the distinction of being the largest in the collection. It has another distinction, for the artist has never in his life taken so long over a picture of that size as he did over this. To describe it as a labour of love is but to say what should be said of every other panel, but of all the commissions he has received Mr. Stone regards Sir Lawrence's request that he should paint a contribution for the hall as the most flattering he has ever had. Mr. Stone's idea was to make it as characteristic of himself as possible, and he put into it the things he loved best himself. For this reason the cat appears prominently in the foreground, for he is a great lover of cats, and, as I once heard him say, "The things I like most are a fine day, a lovely garden, good company, and a cat." These are certainly all present in his picture, which many artists have described as "a Marcus Stone at his best." The background was painted from a water-colour study made in a garden in

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"SILVER BIRCHES." By J. MacWhirter, R.A. | "CENTAURS." By J. Archer, R.S.A. | "A SEASCAPE." By Colin Hunter, A.R.A.

Surrey, but modified and altered for the purpose of this panel. That water-colour enjoyed the distinction of being the only picture from Mr. Stone's brush in the Academy of 1901. The materials of this picture were afterwards adapted to another picture of a different size and structure which the artist painted some time ago, and which is known to collectors of reproductions of his work.

Mrs. R. Williams is alone among the artist band with three subjects, one a landscape, while two are souvenirs of Sir Lawrence's old house in Regent's Park.

Mr. MacWhirter's admirers will delight in one of the silver birches of which—even before the year London went wild over his famous "Three Graces"—he had made so great a study. Those who care for Mr. Colin Hunter's work will as easily recognise his no less characteristic sea-piece, in which the sea is painted with his own masterful knowledge of its ever-varying moods.

Perhaps two circumstances conspired to make Mr. J. Archer paint "A Fight Between Two Centaurs" for his friend. In the first place, some years ago he did paint a picture in which there were Centaurs, and Sir Lawrence admired it very much indeed. In the next, it was intended as a delicate compliment to the artist who in his own art has shown so much power in realizing the old classic life and mythology and so much knowledge in reproducing it. It will be noticed that the background consists of a waterfall. The reason Mr. Archer introduced it was that in a certain article he came across a reference to the Centaurs, who every student of mythology will remember were

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"VIEW IN VICENZA." By John O'Connor. "JOAN OF ARC." By Blake Wirgman. "VIEW IN VENICE." By Van Haanen.

represented as the sons of Zeus and Nephele (the cloud), as the symbols of the torrent which hurls in its course stones and branches of trees, the weapons the Centaurs were always said to use.

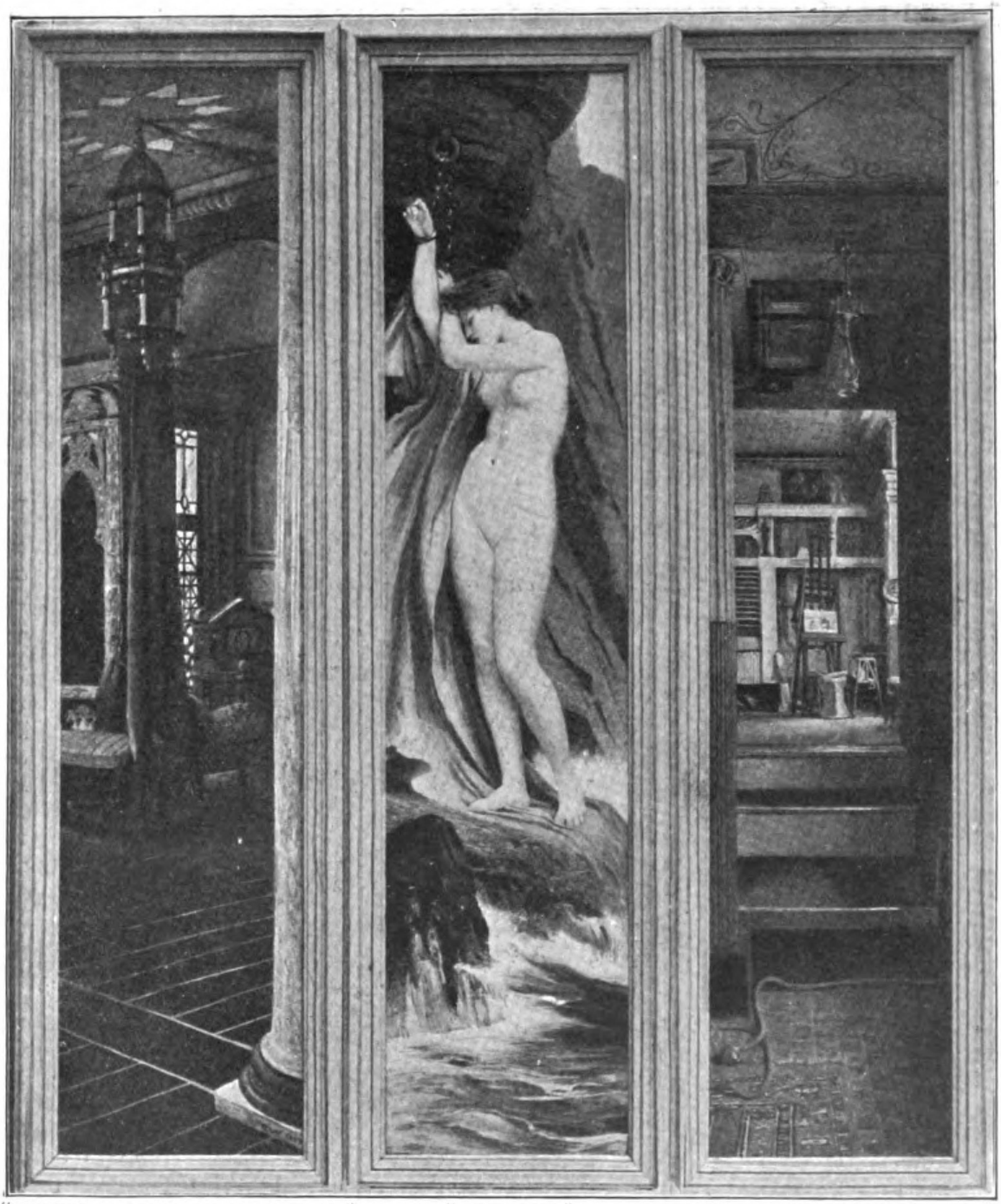
The contribution of the late Mr. John O'Connor, who was at one time a scene painter, is a view in Vicenza, Northern Italy.

Mr. Wirgman's picture of Joan of Arc in armour with an angel bearing a crown of immortality to place upon her brow is particularly beautiful in colouring, and is especially remarkable for its realism, for his Maid of Orleans is a typical French peasant woman.

Mr. Van Haanen's picture is a view from the window of his studio in Venice, and represents the Rio Terra, Ognisanti. The chief towers shown are those belonging to the churches Ognisanti, San Sebastiano, and San Raffaelo.

Andromeda recently chained to her rock with only the fear of the monster in her

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"THE DRAWING-ROOM, TOWNSHEND HOUSE." By Mrs. R. Williams.

"ANDROMEDA." By F. Dicksee, R.A.

"THE STUDIO, TOWNSHEND HOUSE." By Mrs. R. Williams.

soul, intensified, perhaps, by the other fear that his coming might be delayed and she should suffer the agony of life before death came to her relief, and while yet no Perseus lighted up her wretchedness with the shadow of his approaching, is the subject chosen by Mr. Frank R. Dicksee, R.A.

Mrs. Williams supplies two other panels besides that already shown, one representing the drawing-room and the other the studio of Townshend House. It cannot fail to be noticed in the picture of the drawing-room how great is the contrast between the dark boards and the white lines between them. This was an effect which may be said to have been invented by Sir Lawrence himself. He had the floors stained jet-black, and the divisions between the boards grooved out and filled with holly. The result was very striking, and, it need hardly be said, has been copied by many people.

The first question which everyone will ask in looking at the picture of the studio is, "What is the picture on the easel?"

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"FLOWERS."
By Alfred Parsons, A.R.A.

"ITALIAN LANDSCAPE."
By M. R. Corbet, A.R.A.

Happily, I am in a position to answer the question. It is called "An Old Story," and it is painted in water-colour. Messrs. Agnew bought it, but what has become of it perhaps only they can tell. The picture is further interesting as giving an insight into Sir Lawrence's method. He invariably sits to his easel on a basket-work stool, while on the little table next the seat he has his paints and an ash-tray, which he frequently brings into requisition, for he smokes when he paints.

The landscape of the late Mr. M. R. Corbet is from a study made in Italy, the mountain in the background being a part of the Carrara range, one of his favourite haunts during his life. Unfortunately, black and white can give no idea of the exquisite colouring; the blue of the kingfisher being like a wonderful turquoise set in gold, which is the dominant colour of the grass and plants of the foreground.

A certain cheery humour which always distinguished the work of the late Mr. Stacy Marks is apparent in the two panels, the right-hand one of which is inscribed "L. A. T., from his friend H. S. M.," with the date 1887 beneath. The sailor, with his "smiling morning face," is talking up to the maid of the Anchor Inn, bidding her good-morning, and it was Mr. Marks's idea that he should always wish Sir Lawrence good-morning on his behalf as he went through the hall to his studio.

The fact that Sir Lawrence is greatly interested in the art of Japan, and is, indeed, a member of the Japanese Society, decided Mr. Alfred East, A.R.A., to select a Japanese subject for his picture. It has the distinctive feature that belongs to Japanese art in that it introduces the marvellous white cone of Fuji-yama. The panel was painted at the very

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spot from which Hokusai, the leader of what may be called the naturalist or realistic school of Japanese artists, painted one of thirty-six views of his beloved mountain. Mr. East placed his easel on a bank of grey sand thrown up by the sea, and relieved from dulness by a pine growth. Looking towards the mountain his eye dwelt with pleasure on the beautiful "Valley of Sweet Waters," as the natives thus charmingly name the village of Suzukawa, built on the edge of a lake in which Fuji is always seen reflected in the pictures painted from that spot. While making his sketch, attended by his servant, Mr. East saw the earth begin to move, as it were, in undulating folds. He stopped to look at the remarkable phenomenon, for he had not seen an earthquake in Japan before, when his servant turned to him and said: "Honoured master, it will be fine to-morrow, for whenever there is an earthquake in the morning it is fine the next day."



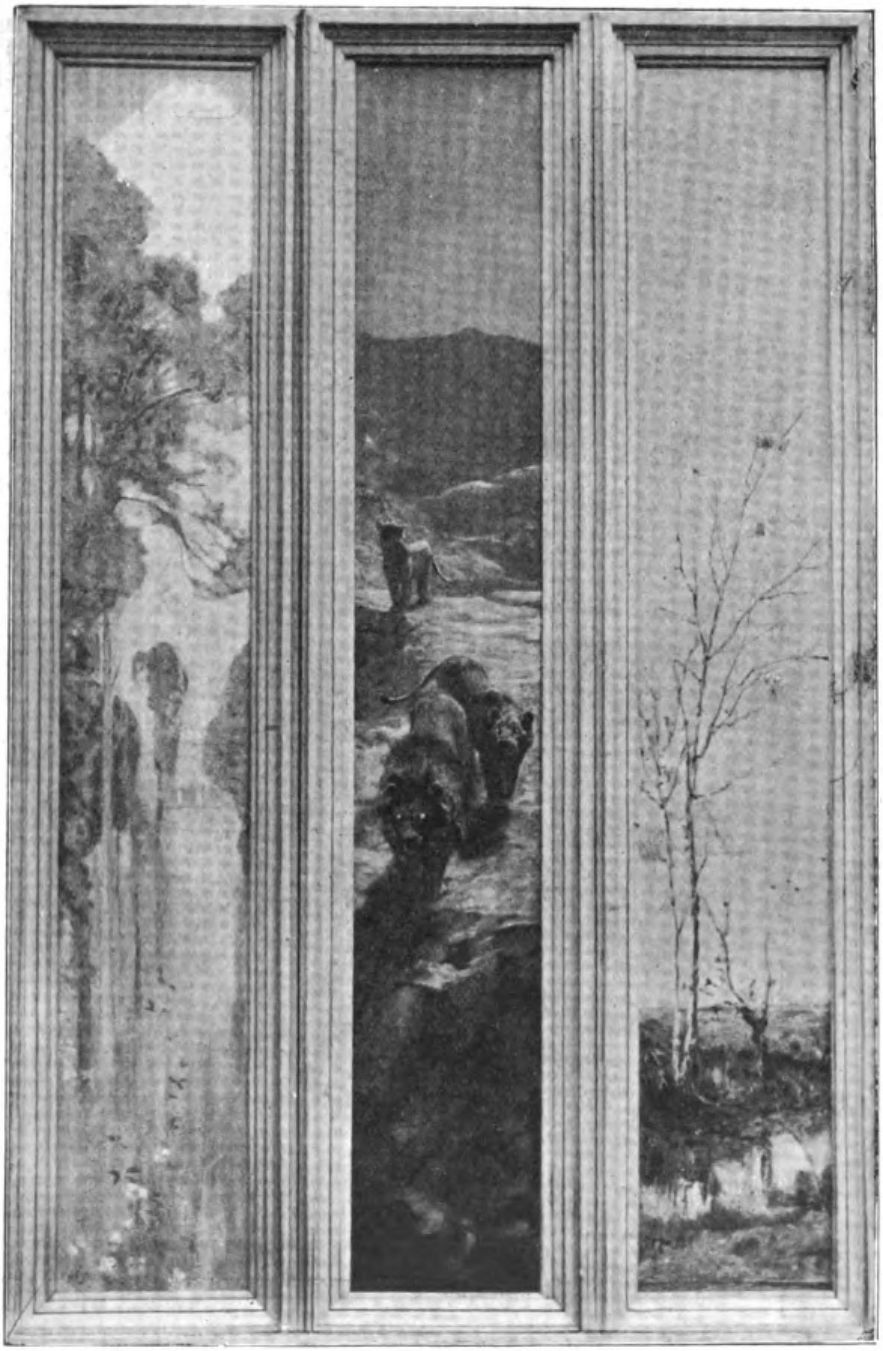
"AT THE ANCHOR INN."
By H. Stacy Marks, R.A.

In this panel one seems to look out of the present into the past, as in that of Mr. Briton Riviere, R.A., which is placed next to it, one seems to come out of the past into the present, as the lions come towards one out of the dark. It presents that subtle spirit of truth which one feels in the presence of a picture as opposed to a piece of painting; for, even in the reproduction, one appreciates the brooding mystery of the Eastern night and the strange solemnity that belongs to the contemplation of a race of animals older than ourselves.

The little landscape of Madame Mesdag van Houten was one of the first presented to Sir Lawrence. It was, indeed, painted for his old house, Townshend House, Regent's Park, which he left in 1885, and it had for its companions the pictures of Mr. John O'Connor, Mr. Van Haanen, and Mr. Pope. It is a scene in Drenthe, one of the northern provinces of Holland, where Madame Mesdag and her husband had recently been spending some time studying from Nature. This panel, however, was painted from memory.

Mr. Herbert Schmalz's picture will be recognised by all who remember his justly celebrated work, "Christiani ad Leones," or "The Martyrs," as one of the principal figures in that composition, which, beautiful in its execution, realized to the full the grim tragedy of those who were "butchered to make a Roman holiday." In arrangement, however, Sir Lawrence's panel presents many differences from the large picture, which has been exhibited in Europe, America, Australia, and Africa to the delight of countless thousands of spectators. Sir Lawrence himself greatly admired that picture, and it was his idea that this figure should form the subject of his panel. Strange to say, a girl of

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"VALLEY OF SWEET WATERS." By Alfred East, A.R.A. "LIONS." By Briton Riviere, R.A. "A SCENE IN DRENTHE" By Mme. Mesdag van Houten.

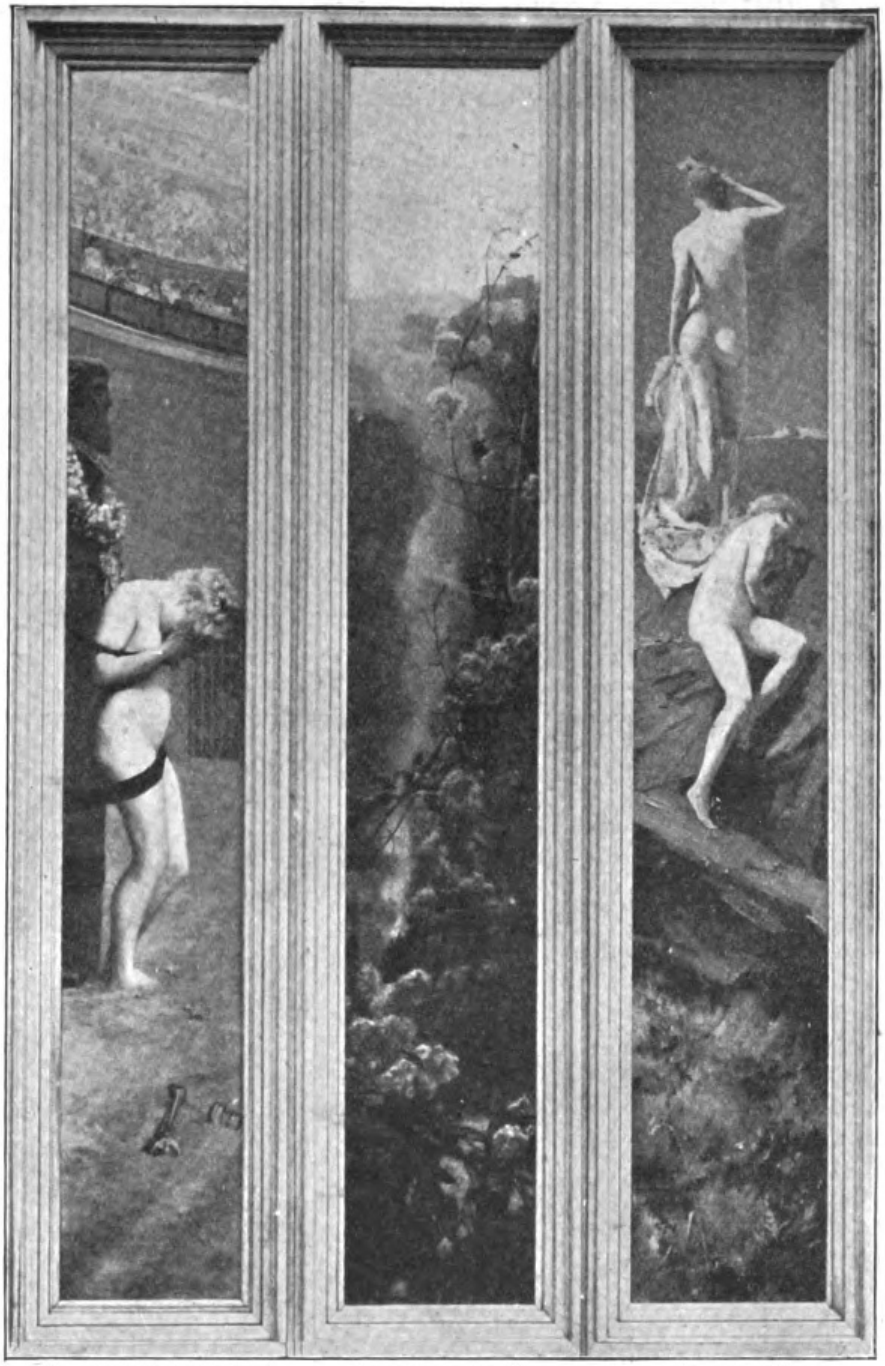
fifteen, a model, inspired the whole subject, though without a single word being spoken by her. She was resting after a pose, or just about to reassume the pose in which she had been sitting, when unconsciously she stood in a position the dramatic force of which deeply impressed Mr. Schmalz. "Keep that position," he said, and picking up a block he made a rapid sketch of her. That simple fact was the nucleus from which "The Martyrs" was gradually developed. No one can fail to notice how the bonds which bind the girl to the post seem to cut into the soft flesh of her arms. This was realized absolutely by the model, for Mr. Schmalz had a post erected in his studio and bound the girl to it exactly as represented. Within the limited area of the panel it will be noticed how the whole spirit of the large picture has been retained, even the mark in the foreground of the chariot-wheel, which has thrown to one side the thigh and shin-bones of some long dead-and-gone martyr who had perished for the sake of her faith.

"Befano Fuoci" was the name Mr. Herbert A. Olivier gave to his panel, and, as he humorously said to me, "So much depends on a name, whether it be a dog or a picture." Perhaps "Traveller's Joy" would best convey in English the spirit of the picture, which represents a spot in the hills of Asolo, so well loved by Robert Browning. All along the road the tendrils are bright with the wild clematis, or traveller's joy, the seeds of which always seem to gather into themselves all the light of Heaven that they can. On the eve of the Epiphany, on the tops of the hills fires are lighted, some say to remind the people of the Star in the East, which was the traveller's joy in those rare days of old, and others that the fires are merely to frighten away evil spirits. It was to embody the actual fact as well as the allegorical one that the clear mind of

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the artist gathers all the light it can from everything around in order that it may see that the artist was inspired to produce a very beautiful work.

The fantasy contributed by Mr. J. R. Weguelin suggests an incident which could scarcely occur in our present-day environment, unless we could get very far away indeed from so-called civilization. As he himself says, "It may represent an incident occurring in any serene and lonely spot where the sea is blue and smooth, say the Greek islands, in an age when manners were simple." As a matter of fact, a fault in the construction of his studio at Winchelsea caused the sun to penetrate into his studio at the extreme height of the summer, and so gave him the opportunity, of which he availed himself, of painting a figure in actual sunlight.



"A CHRISTIAN MARTYR." By Herbert Schmalz.

"BEFANO FUOCI." By H. A. Olivier.

"BATHERS." By J. R. Weguelin.

It is not only the panels which are the gift of friends, but the decorative flower design over them, and the design of the tiles of which the floor is composed. The former is the work of Mrs. R. Williams, whilst the latter were designed by Mr. Henschel, the famous musician. It is a curious fact that only three letters are required for the initials of the four members of Sir Lawrence's family, L. A. T. serving for all; those three being the initials of Sir Lawrence and Lady Alma-Tadema and Miss Lawrence Alma-Tadema, while Miss Alma Tadema's initials are A. A. T.

The hall communicates by means of a flight of brass steps, which are indicated in the last illustration, with Sir Lawrence's studio, to which access is gained by means of a great door. This is adorned by a massive shield in beaten brass, the gift of Mr. George Simonds, the famous sculptor. For a long time the question what he should do remained in abeyance. At last one day he received a circle of white paper with a line from Sir Lawrence, saying, "This is what I want for the door of my studio," adding that Mr. Simonds could do what he

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liked, "but it must be repoussé and in brass," and with the words the exact dimensions required, but nothing more. For a long time Mr. Simonds pondered over the subject, and at last decided to go back to the old quatrocento form. He then began to divide up his circle into sections, each of which should contain a figure separated by a shield. Finally the design shaped itself in his mind, and he determined to make it express the day by its four distinctive features—dawn, daylight, evening, night. Dawn is suggested by the female figure, her head surmounted by the morning star, and the lark, with outstretched wings, rising at her feet. On the corresponding portion on the other side, day is shown by the figure of a man crowned with the sun and with a trumpet in his hand calling to action.

Evening is suggested by the man resting after the toil of the day and refreshing himself with food and drink, in the lower right-hand panel, while night is presented by a sleeping woman. At the top of the shield is the head with the butterfly wings of invention, a delicate compliment to the mental activity of Sir Lawrence's household, in which the inventive faculty may literally be said to be always being exercised, for it is the home of artists, Sir Lawrence, Lady Alma-Tadema, and Miss Alma-Tadema all being painters, while Miss Lawrence Alma-Tadema is an artist in words, and her gift has been made manifest in play and poem, in novel, in short story, and in criticism. The outer design of the shield is an ordinary Greek honeysuckle ornament, selected because one of the bosses had to be movable to loosen the spring that opens the door. Each panel and shield was beaten separately and had to be brazed over a charcoal fire. It says much for the exquisite spirit in which this gift, like all the others, was wrought that Mr. Simonds would not allow anyone to join the component parts but himself. As the shield is 3ft. 8in. in diameter, it was very difficult to prevent it twisting. In order to obviate this accident a great iron tray was made, set on legs, and filled with charcoal. When it was hot, big gas blowpipes were brought to bear on it, and in that way the solder was made to run. Altogether the work was in hand for about a year, though it need hardly be said it was not being worked at continuously. Still, in order that he might get the best result possible, Mr. Simonds actually made a complete model of the shield in brass, beating it out as carefully as the one which he sent to Sir Lawrence, and that model he still possesses.



THE BRASS SHIELD ON THE STUDIO DOOR.
By George Simonds.

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By A. B. Cooper.

I'VE double reason—good and bad—for remembering the Christmas of 189—, because, while it was the most humiliating day of my life, it ended my career as a swell cracksman, and was the commencement of my better days.

I'd long had my eye on Wharton Manor as a crib worth the cracking, and, as I never was the mere midnight marauder who is popularly supposed to lurk under the bed until the family is asleep, I thought the dinner-hour on Christmas Eve a favourable opportunity for taking my pick of the jewel-cases of Lord Wharton's guests, and for annexing the unconsidered trifles that doubtless strewed their dressing-tables. I did not forget that some of the most valuable articles would at that moment be enhancing the charms of their fair owners, but, as I always worked single-handed and could not hope to carry away a van-load, I reckoned upon picking up sufficient to pay me handsomely for my trouble.

Audacity is half the battle in artistic burglary. I always trusted to my wits, and—I will say this for myself—I never carried a weapon of any kind. I took the fortunes of war and considered that, if I were dolt enough to walk into a trap or let another man's wits outwit mine, or another man's legs outrun mine, I ought to yield him the palm like a gentleman. And it was the fact that things panned out so differently from anything I could have foreseen—but that's the end of the story, and we are still at the beginning.

Christmas, 189—, was the snowiest in my memory. It was a real Christmas-card Christmas, and as I stood in the deep shadow of a yew within forty yards of the manor the scene pleased my artistic eye not a little.

The great hall door was wide open in spite of the severity of the weather, for it was a still night, and a flood of rosy light from the crimson-covered lamps and fairy lights streamed out upon the drive. Low lights, too, burned in most of the upper windows, but as the whole house-party was at dinner they revealed no sign of life within. The drive swept round to my right as I faced the house. Having studied the geography of the neighbourhood, I knew where it was, certainly, or I should have had difficulty in locating it. A line of yew trees, similar to the one behind which I stood, was planted at intervals along the near edge of the drive, and the opposite side was bounded by a broad stone balustrade, something like the parapet of Waterloo Bridge, though not nearly so high.

This stone fence was a beautiful ornament to the manor and was admired by everybody, but, strangely enough, it was for use even more than ornament. The manor stood high, and the ground to the right fell away very suddenly into a deep

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dingle. This dingle was full of bracken and brambles which filled the spaces between the young trees, but the rock cropped out here and there and made it a dangerous place on a dark night. That was the reason of the stone balustrade. Farther down the drive the ravine shallowed off, and winding paths went in and out, which made it a very jolly place in the summer.

When first I took my position of observation behind the yew I got a fright. Casting my eyes towards the balustrade, I saw what I thought was a man looking directly at me. It was the hat that made the figure appear so real, yet I could have laughed aloud at my fears the next minute. It was a man indeed, but it was a man of snow, built on the coping of the balustrade in imitation of a statue. The house was full of young fellows and girls, with a fair sprinkling of small boys—Lord Wharton had no fewer than six of his own; and they had spent the morning—all the lot of them—setting up this effigy, just for the fun of the thing.

This figure could not be seen from the front door because the sweep of the drive brought the yews into the line of sight. From where I stood, however, I could have knocked his old silk hat off with a snowball, and, such are the mad impulses of our poor human nature, I could have found it in my heart almost to have had a shy.

Of course I did no such thing, for I could see by the dishes the flunkeys were carrying in that dinner was getting on, and that I was much later at my post than I had intended to be. I must bestir myself if I meant business.

Business! Yes—it was my business then, I'm sorry to say, and no easy business either. Yet I knew exactly what I was going to attempt and how I meant to attempt it. There was nothing original in the plan. Ivy and an open window summed it up. The back of the house would doubtless have been safer, but then my booty was in front, and at such an hour it would have been ten times more risky to traverse the house from back to front than to go boldly in at an upper front window.

Behold me then, ten minutes later, stealthily peering into a dimly-lighted room most luxuriously furnished. I had experienced more difficulty than usual—for I was as nimble as a cat—in negotiating the ivy, because I wore a long, lightish coloured overcoat, made necessary by my tendency to rheumatism. Only a couple of candles in candlesticks of beaten silver served to light the room, but I could see the gleam of jewels and rich ornaments on the dressing-table, half hidden by a heavy curtain which hung from a sort of carved oaken bracket branching from the wall.



"THEY HAD SPENT THE MORNING SETTING UP THIS EFFIGY."

I stepped inside upon the thick pile of the carpet and stole noiselessly towards the glittering table. The next moment you might have knocked me down with a feather. Behind the curtain, quickly pocketing the smallest and most valuable objects he could see, was a man in evening dress—a big man, half

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as big again as myself, but with "gentleman's valet" written all over him. We were not four feet apart, and the gasp of astonishment I gave was enough to make him nearly jump out of his skin.

His dismay was only momentary. He knew the next instant what I was there for, and was evidently as quick-witted as I, for, before I could say "peas," he had darted between the wall and the curtain, banged the window into its place, and yelled "Thieves! thieves! thieves"—a truer plural than anyone imagined—at the very top of his voice.

For the wink of an eyelid I meant to tackle him, but what was the use? Moments were mighty precious just then, and even while he was shouting—the sly wretch—I turned and bolted for the door, intending to make a dash through the camp of the enemy, and trust to my heels to get clear away.

As bad luck would have it, as I turned the bend of the stairs that brought me in full view of the brilliantly-lighted hall I ran full tilt against a big flunkey with a tray of wine-glasses. Talk about a shindy! A gas explosion would scarcely have made more noise. Broken glass, clattering tray, and the bumpety-bump of two heavy bodies falling down stairs, was something to remember. I fell uppermost, and giving myself a bounce up, with a prod below the belt which knocked the remaining wind out of the footman, I made for the door again as if a legion had been behind me.

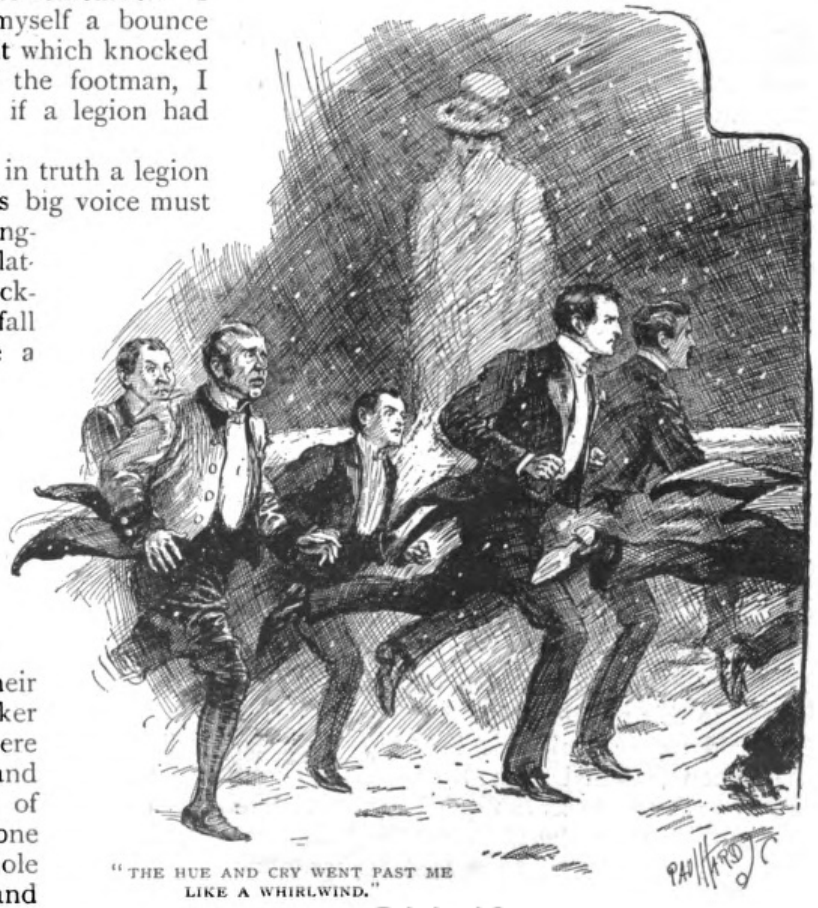
Nor was it mere fancy, for in truth a legion was behind me. The valet's big voice must have penetrated to the dining-room, and the tremendous clatter of the footman and my luckless self caused by the downfall brought the party out like a swarm of bees.

"Thieves!" came like a thunderclap from the top of the stairs. The valet was playing the game to perfection. I had thirty yards start, but I knew that among the guests would be many a young athlete from the 'Varsities — men who could do their hundred in even time—socker and rugger men who were accustomed to rough and tumble — so my chances of getting clear away were none too rosy. Besides, the whole party were lighter shod and clad than I, and I knew that these young fellows, though in no rig for snow, would not care a straw about ruining their dress shoes.

I got round the sweep of the drive and was in the straight. It was three hundred yards to the great gate, and cover, except the yews, was scarce. A gleam of lanterns ahead decided me. My way was blocked. Meanwhile my wits had been working at express speed. It was snowing again in heavy flakes. I purposely fell headlong into the snow piled on the edge of the drive, rolled over and over, and clutched an armful of it to my body and shoulders. I then scrambled up, leapt upon the stone balustrade, snatched the old silk hat—all snow-covered—from the head of the snow man, gave that unfortunate effigy a shove which toppled it neck and crop into the depths of the dingle, and myself dropped upon my knees on the top of the snowy foundation it had left behind it.

It was the work of five seconds at the most, and there was I, with the snow-crowned hat over my eyes, my overcoat thickly caked with snow and my legs wholly invisible, posing in the room and stead of the man of snow.

The hue and cry went past me like a whirl-



"THE HUE AND CRY WENT PAST ME LIKE A WHIRLWIND."

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wind, half-a-dozen flunkeys in their knee-breeches and yellow stockings bringing up the rear. They ran full speed, thirty yards past my post of observation, into a band of waits, with lanterns and instruments, from the village. These yokels were ready to turn and fly themselves when they saw the strange exodus from the Manor, thinking, no doubt, that all the ghosts of which the old house was well known to be the trysting-place had suddenly appeared—not in singles but in battalions—and scared the guests away from their dinner and out of their five senses.

But the sudden halt didn't help me in the least. The dilemma was distinctly mutual, and I did not bless the waits one little bit. Had the thief gone down the drive they would surely have seen him. It was a perfect mystery how he could possibly have dodged them. He had been seen in full flight round the bend. He must either have gone over into the dingle—a most unlikely course if he knew what he was doing—or he was hiding behind the yews.

Then commenced a game of hide and seek. I nearly burst with laughter as I saw this mixed company dodge in and out among the sombre trees and catch at each other convulsively, each thinking the other a burglar. But there was no opportune opening for me. All I could do was to kneel stock still. One of the waits pointed me out. His attitude showed terror though I could not see his face. The laugh that greeted his "find" sent him behind a yew tree on a fresh trail and very greatly reassured me. I evidently looked my part.

Just then there was another arrival—the local policeman and a big man in plain clothes whom I guessed was a 'tec. Lord Wharton and some of the guests were in a group near me when they came along, and I heard the whole colloquy. Their arrival at that moment was quite unconnected with my affair, but it seemed to fit into the circumstances as detailed by his lordship in a few sentences.

I heard the 'tec say: "He's a very old hand, known commonly as 'Toff' Smith, but his real name is Charles Markland. He's wanted for a dozen big jobs, and I've had almost certain advice that he's somewhere in this neighbourhood."

"It'll be he," said his lordship, "but he has been baulked this time. Lieutenant Fontenoy's valet was too quick for him. He has got away in the most amazing fashion, but it's a comfort to know that he has gone empty-handed."

I'd heard of "Toff" Smith. He was one of the big-wigs of the profession—a perfect Napoleon of burglary—but it goes without saying I was not he. So I was now not only personating a snow man but involuntarily standing in the shoes of "Toff" Smith as well.

"He's got clear away!" one cried. "Why trouble further? James tells me he did not have time to pick up a pin. Let us have a lark while we're out." I guessed it was Lieutenant Fontenoy who spoke, and all the youngsters, who had enjoyed the whole thing immensely, set up a shout, for he had evidently suggested something.

"Cock-shies! Pay yer penny and take yer chance! Now, then, fair and square! No, don't cross the drive. Who'll knock his hat off first? Take yer chice—coker-nut or cigar! I'm frozen to death! It'll warm us up!"

These were the cries I heard, but I didn't at the first blush tumble to their meaning. The ladies, clad in thick wraps, were at the windows all this time, where they could look along the drive and get news of the search. Now I heard them laugh merrily as a small boy ran across and made some communication to them.

I quickly learned what it was. They were to witness a bombardment. The whole band, guests and waits—the police had hurried off—were gathered together about twenty yards from where I knelt, and at the word of command they let fly.

I have enjoyed snowballing in my time, but that was when I had a chance of potting my opponent in the nape of the neck when he was stooping for ammunition. But to be the sole target for thirty well-directed missiles per second is another story. Move I dared not. I must grin and bear it, or, failing that, bear it without grinning. I had jammed the beastly old hat too tightly over my cranium for it to be easily dislodged, and the fun in consequence waxed fast and furious.

By degrees discipline broke down, and the set distance was no longer regarded. Snowballs innumerable came at me from a range of a few yards with terrific force. Recognition was quickly put out of the question, for had I been a veritable snow man I could not have looked more like one. Every snowball that hit—and few, indeed, missed—left its contribution to my make-up, and I was shortly in peril of suffocation from the accumulation of snow about my mouth and nostrils, and almost equally in danger of temporary blindness, but that the hat-rim protected me enough, at least, to keep half an eye intact.

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Had not the top of the wall been broad and I on my knees, I must inevitably have gone over willy-nilly; but hitherto I had kept my place, and I meant to continue to do so, for the fall backwards had greater terrors for me even than remaining where I was.

But now the clapping of fair hands, the exhilarating exercise, the excitement of the last twenty minutes, and the spirit of mad revel which enters into the hearts of all men occasionally, wrought my doom.

The waits, as aforementioned, had been pressed into the fray. It was Christmas time, and class distinctions went by the board. Even the man who played the big bass viol had propped his instrument against a tree and joined in the sport. But now—like me—they were to be sorry they had come.



"THEY LEVELLED THE BASS FIDDLE LIKE A BATTERING-RAM."

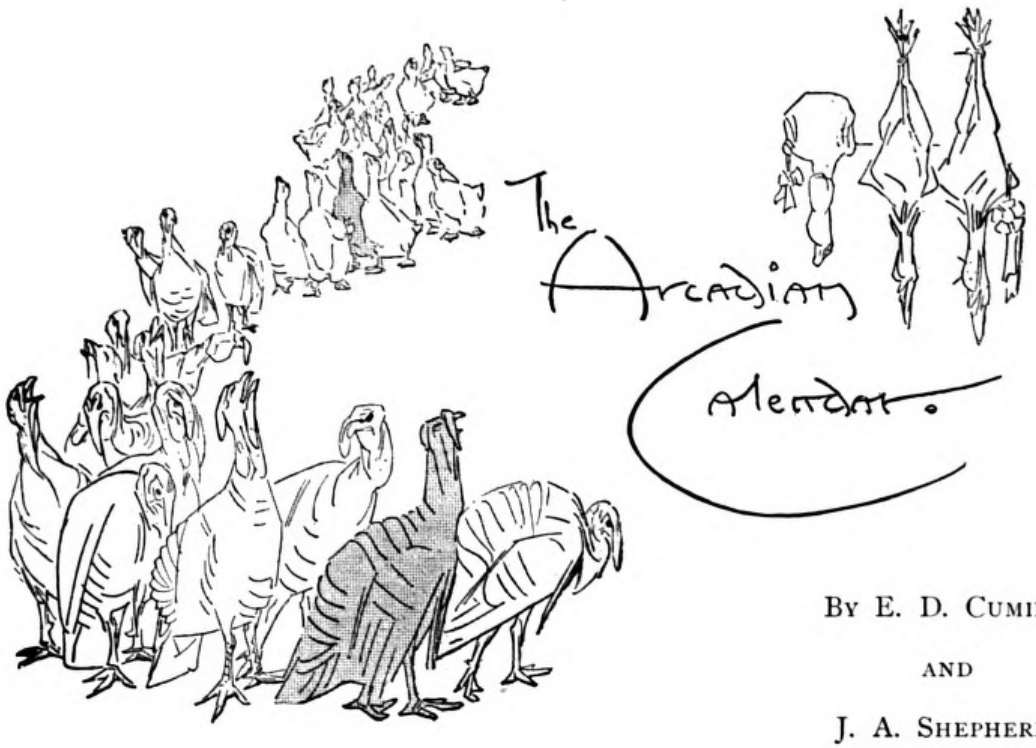
Half-a-dozen young sparks, to vary the amusement, seized the big bass fiddle, and the youngsters fought for clarinet, hautboy, ophicleide, euphonium, and trombone! Then, to the sound of a wild, unearthly pibroch, they levelled the bass fiddle like a battering-ram and charged for the supposed snow man with shouts of laughter, thinking to demolish it finally and end the sport.

I saw it coming, and I knew that the bottom end of a bass fiddle has an ugly spike, which might put an end to my career more surely than the dingle: I never waited for the shock. I went down without a touch, and, rolling over and over down the steep bank, I only remember thinking I should never stop, and—then—nothing!

How I got to Everledge—a small town five miles away—I never rightly knew. I came to myself in the dingle, while it was still dark, with pains in every limb. The nurse at the Cottage Hospital—bless her—tells me that I was picked up in an apparently dying state, and everybody sympathized with my being lost in the snow. I never told her the truth—how could I when she was so kind and good!—but if she had guessed why I was so interested in the district weekly paper she might have suspected something.

Here is the conclusion of the paragraph which took my eye: "This is one of the most cunning robberies on record. The detectives think the whole affair was a put-up job on the part of 'Toff' Smith—Lieutenant Fontenoy's valet—who left a most impudent note behind him, for while the party were all disporting themselves with the snow man, or applauding from the windows, he got clear away with three thousand pounds' worth of jewellery."

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By E. D. Cuming

and

J. A. Shepherd.

December

AT the beginning of this month the blue or mountain hare has finished changing into his white winter coat. Living as he does on high grounds, where the snow falls early and lies long, he finds safety from his enemies, the fox and eagle, in clothes which match his surroundings. He is so much in the habit of making this change that he does it without consulting the weather forecast; and a white hare in a snowless landscape feels his conspicuousness acutely, hiding himself whenever he can in thick clumps of heather. This white coat is really an overcoat, a new growth of fur, to match which the summer coat gradually changes its colour. In March, when he has done with his warm clothes, he sheds them and dons a new summer suit.



"WINTER CLOTHING."

Blackgame would seem to suffer from cold feet, for in snowy weather they renounce their habit of roosting on the ground and perch on the trees. Birds resort to various devices to keep themselves warm in winter; for the most audacious we naturally look to the robin. When *he* suffers from cold feet he will follow a shooting-party, and use the freshly-killed game as a warming-pan. He has no fear of guns, and will snuggle down on the quivering carcass of a rabbit till the keeper puts it in the game-bag. It is quite in keeping with his character that he should scold the

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gamekeeper for taking it away from him. When the snow lies long the brown hare leaves the open fields and takes refuge in the woods and copses, where there is a certain amount of shelter, and where food is available in the forbidden shape of the bark of young trees. The hare will not face a sudden, heavy snowfall if it surprise her in her form out in the open; she prefers to be snowed-in where she sits, comfortably—or uncomfortably—conscious that she can go without food for a week or so at a pinch. Her breath keeps one tiny hole open for air, and probably she spends the time in sleep.



"NOTHING FIT FOR AN AUK TO EAT."

The storms of winter carry seafaring birds inland, where they do not want to go and have nothing to do. In the winter of 1894–95 numbers of little auks were picked up exhausted in the midland and southern counties. The little auk always pays our northern coasts a visit in the cold weather, but does not care to come farther south, much less make trips inland, where he cannot find anything fit for an auk to eat. It is only when the wind brings upon him pressure he cannot resist that he leaves the coast. So large and powerful a bird as the gannet makes a good fight for it before he submits to the wind: more than once a gannet has been found inland so sound asleep that he was easily caught by hand; he was simply worn out from battling with the elements. The bittern, who was formerly a resident in the eastern counties, but turned his back on a nation which displays such a passion for draining marshes, is a regular winter visitor, and is most common after a stormy succession of east winds, which bring him over from Holland. He is become a naturalized Dutchman; bittern prejudices are more regarded in Holland.

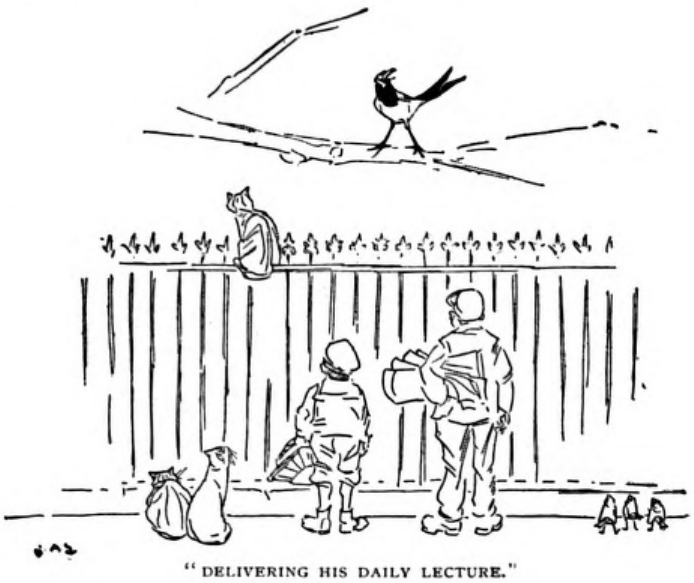
The fogs we look for at this season bring many birds to grief; like men, birds lose their way, or grow so utterly bewildered that they drop to earth and remain where they alight. One morning a few years ago, after a day or two of fog not thicker than that which is commonly bestowed on London in winter, a woodcock was picked up alive in Jermyn Street. The game-dealer to whom the finder brought it said the bird seemed "confused"; no doubt its feelings were comparable to those a town-reared child would experience if suddenly dropped into the haunts of a woodcock. Some twenty years ago or more an astonished gunner shot a woodcock on Tooting Common; it was a foggy December morning, and the bird, having evidently lost its



"THE BITTERN TURNS HIS BACK ON THE NATION."

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bearings, had decided to wait for it to clear. A little grebe who had lost its head in the fog allowed itself to be caught in the street at Market Drayton a year ago; and Mr. Harting has record of a curious catch of kestrels during a fog. A number of them, on migration presumably, came aboard a steamer in the Baltic; they were either exhausted or utterly stupefied, for they allowed the sailors to catch them. Nine of these kestrels were brought alive to the curator of the Newcastle Museum. It is a singular thing, but in misty weather such wary birds as wild duck either are less vigilant or miscalculate distance, for you can often approach within easy shot of them before they take wing.

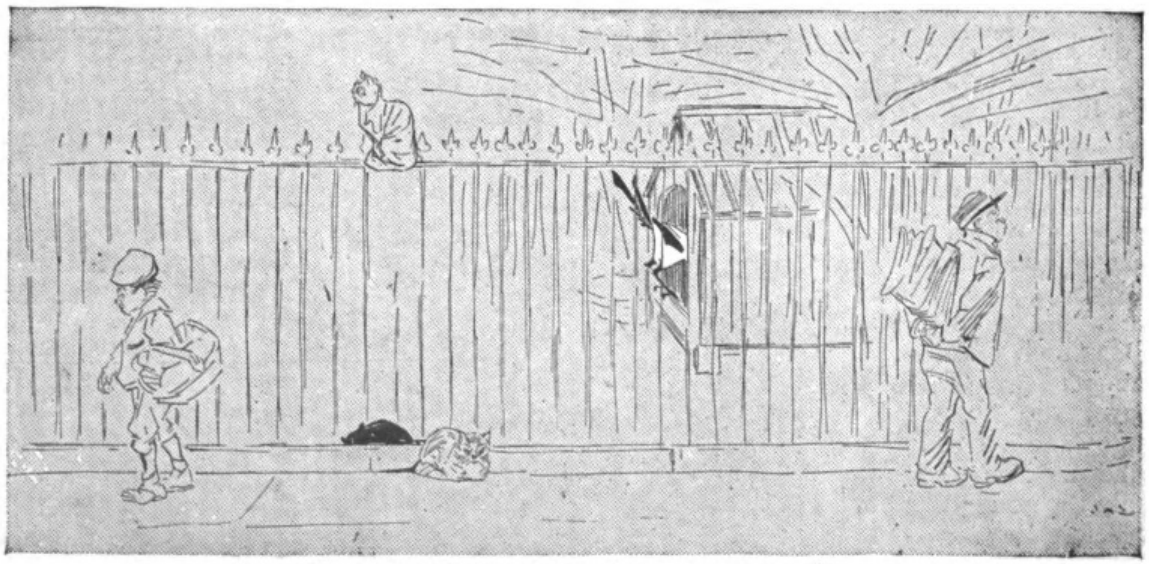


"DELIVERING HIS DAILY LECTURE."

A tame magpie I had used to remain at home in the big dog-kennel he occupied when it was foggy. One morning a thick black fog came on while he was delivering from the branch of a tree one of his daily lectures to an appreciative audience of message-boys, cats, and sparrows; he immediately ceased, hurried silently down to his kennel, and went to bed, angry, puzzled, and alarmed.

The field-mouse has taken up his winter quarters; sometimes he patronizes a mole's run, having made sure there are in it no moles who would give him a cordial welcome—for dinner; even then it is not always a safe abode, because the weasel is in the habit of seeking refuge there too. The field-mouse is most commonly brought to light by the farmer who is threshing out a stack of corn in winter. A corn stack combines shelter and food together, and both field and harvest mice colonize the interior, making tunnels in all directions. If there be a kestrel in the neighbourhood the hum of the threshing machine will bring him post-haste; he knows it means mice.

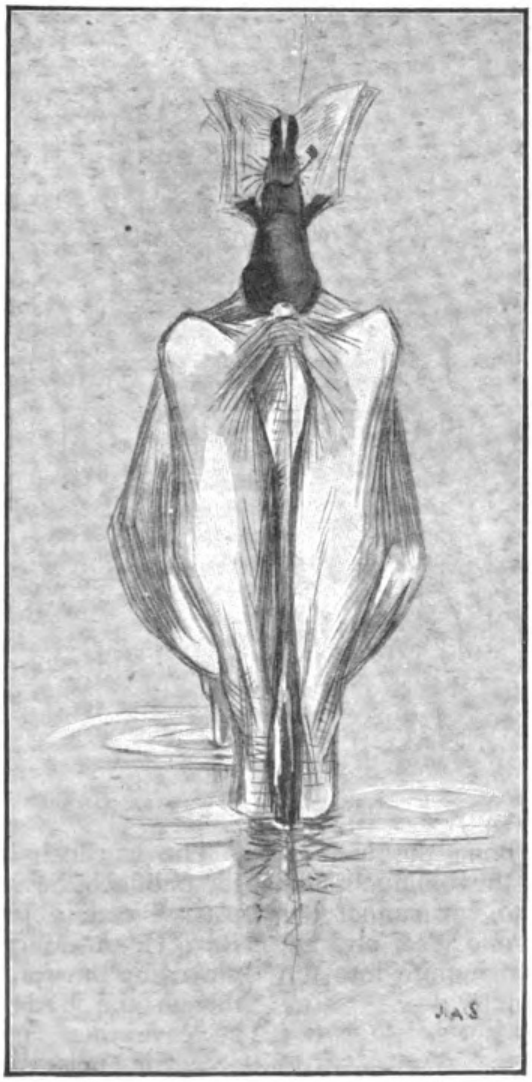
Floods drive wild creatures to unwonted expedients; both hares and rabbits can swim well if forced to take to water, but naturally they do not leave dry land if they can avoid it, and when the floods are out rabbits often take refuge on stone walls if there happen to be any convenient: there they sit with exemplary patience waiting for the waters to subside. The late Mr. Moray Brown once saw a rabbit who had taken refuge on the



"HE WENT TO BED ANGRY, PUZZLED, AND ALARMED."

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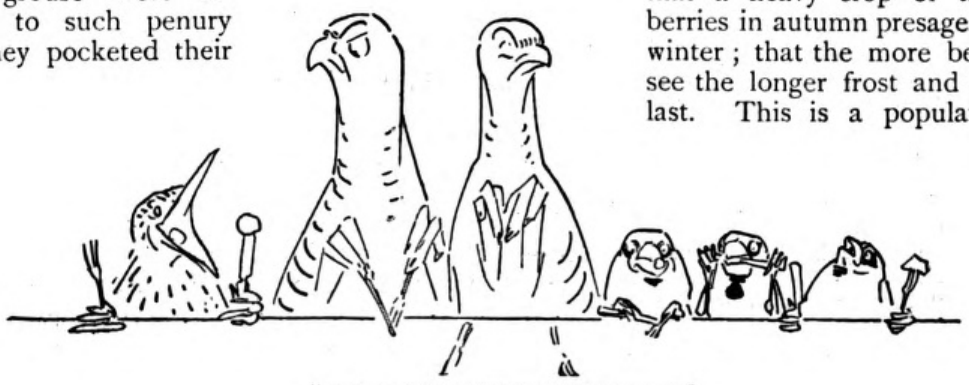
back of a cow; the rabbit appeared quite content, and the cow, up to her knees in water, had no objection to being used as an ark of refuge. The question that naturally presents itself is, how did the rabbit get there? Probably the water was rising fast and he took advantage of the cow's lowered head to reach her back that way.



"HOW DID THE RABBIT GET THERE?"

The grouse, who have not suffered much from the gun for the last few weeks, begin their lawful holidays on the 11th December, and can choose their abiding-places now without fear of man. Grouse take special pride in their tails apparently, for they hate wetting them. When snow lies, you see them stalking about with their tails held so high you wonder what is the matter with the bird. They afford easier opportunities of study when the snow is deep, for then they leave the moors and come down to the low grounds for food and shelter; in very severe weather they have been known to resort to the shore and eat seaweed. Under stress of hunger they will perch on the thorn bushes and eat haws; and a Yorkshire clergyman records a case in which two or three grouse were reduced to such penury that they pocketed their pride and joined the sparrows and starlings on the lawn where crumbs were thrown out. Mr. Chapman says that sometimes, when the snow is deep, the grouse burrow under it for shelter, working out a regular system of tunnels among the stems of old heather, where the snow lies lightly and is easily pushed aside. Here they sleep, no doubt packed together for mutual comfort and consolation. Mention of grouse in the snow recalls the ingenious trap employed by poachers to catch grouse and ptarmigan which Mr. J. E. Millais has described. The snow being fairly deep and hard the poacher arms himself with a bottle (champagne bottle for choice, its shape being the most suitable), and with this implement, neck downwards, he presses holes in the snow; at the bottom of each he puts a few grains of corn, and the trap is made. The birds, trying to reach the food, cannot draw back out of the holes, which are just big enough to admit their bodies with the wings pressed to their sides; and there they remain, tail in air, till the poacher returns.

There is a very generally-cherished belief that a heavy crop of haws and berries in autumn presages a severe winter; that the more berries you see the longer frost and snow will last. This is a popular error—



"THE GROUSE POCKETING THEIR PRIDE."

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"THE BULLFINCH BEGS TO MOVE A RESOLUTION."

deservedly popular, but none the less an error; yet when you see the bullfinches, in companies of a dozen or so, you cannot but feel that they have the same idea, and are assembled in committee to inquire into the food stocks available for winter :—

"I beg for leave," the bullfinch said, "to move a resolution
Concerning that most vital thing—our winter food supplies—
To wit: 'This House regards with dread the future destitution
That looms from every bush and tree and shrub before its eyes.
And so we pray Your Majesty appoint a small commission,
With power to investigate, examine, and report
On measures best to remedy the very grave condition
Of things that's bound to follow when the berry crops fall short.'"
The hawfinch said he'd listened with the warmest admiration
To the brief but lucid motion of his honourable friend,
But he hoped he should convince him from official information
That the scarcity was local, and it did not far extend.
The Board of Food Inspectors, who had travelled, on migration,
And inspected every hedge and wood from Aberdeen to Kent,
Reported that the hips and haws surpassed imagination;
Perhaps this would relieve his friend's alarm to some extent.

The hawfinch is an intelligent bird; like the bullfinch, he repays education, and displays a certain talent for languages. The Rev. H. A. Macpherson reared one which picked up the words and sounds he used, and, though the bird practised his own notes, he gave them up eventually in favour of eccentric noises selected with but slight judgment from those he heard daily.

In the poultry-yard contentment born of high living reigns supreme. The turkeys have forgotten the fate that last Christmas brought upon their relatives, and the shrieks of Michaelmas martyrs have mercifully passed out of the anserine mind. Cold it may be, but the lofty superiority of the turkey's demeanour indicates consciousness that in double rations he is only receiving his deserts. Life is full of compensations; in this case compensation precedes injury. The east winds drive the best clad among men into the house, but the jovial duck is indifferent to cold, and his only complaint is that the ice on the pond has not been broken so that he may enjoy his tub. The air with which the ducks swagger in Hyde Park when man deserts it suggests that they merely lent us the place in the summer out of goodwill.

The cock pheasant who has escaped the gun until now has been only spared for the Christmas shooting party; between lawful

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"CONTENTMENT."

shooting by day and unlawful snaring by night his lot is not a happy one. More discretion on his part would save him in some degree from the dangers of night, but the pheasant will not learn by experience. Every night he advertises the address of his roost by crowing at the top of his voice; and the listening poacher, hearing him, walks straight to the tree whereon he is perched and brings him down—sometimes with a small charge of powder and shot, sometimes with a strong horsehair noose on a long twig, or with stupefying sulphur fumes. The cock pheasant's love of fighting gave a clever poacher an idea for an effective trap. He fixed up a looking-glass, and in front of it a couple of well-sharpened steel knitting needles, which impaled the unsuspecting pheasant charging bravely upon his own reflection. The partridges, roosting on the ground, have most to fear from the net the poachers drag across the fields at night,



A SKETCH IN HYDE PARK—"THE DUCK IN POSSESSION."

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a trick the gamekeeper defeats by sticking thorny bushes at intervals over the pastures. Partridges, by the way, display much judgment in their bed arrangements; the members of the family pack themselves together with their tails in the centre and their heads turned outwards; thus no enemy can approach undiscovered, and, what is probably of equal importance, the birds who face the wind shelter those who do not. Birds who sleep in exposed situations always face the wind: did they not the heaviest feather clothes would be of little protection. Writing of enemies, the method the coots employ in winter to frighten away a hawk is worth mentioning. Coots, like so many other birds, assemble in flocks for the cold weather, and if a hawk stoops at them they splash water at him with their feet. Either the hawk hates being wetted or is terrified by the sight of so many large feet, for the manœuvre is commonly successful. Cold sharpens appetite, and birds of prey are as alert in winter as they are in summer when they have a hungry family to provide for. The golden eagle, who, thanks to the protection afforded him by Scottish landowners, is commoner now than he was fifteen or twenty years ago, takes heavy toll of the mountain hares. The hare, without means of defence, finds refuge, if he can, under some overhanging rock or stone where the bird cannot reach him, and squats there while the eagle, perched hard by but out of his sight, watches his retreat as a cat watches a mouse-hole. The hare will not move while the eagle remains; it seems likely that he waits till his keen sense of hearing tells him that the great bird has gone; not that very sharp ears are necessary to hear the whistling wing-beat of the eagle launching himself into the air.



"WAITING FOR THE MOUNTAIN HARE."

The John Dory is now much in evidence at the fishmonger's; only the fisherman sees that fish at his best, for his brilliant livery, like a well-burnished new penny, fades soon after he dies—his popular name is corrupted from the French *jaune dorée*, "gilded yellow." The John Dory wears his eyes on the top of his head, and his long face suggests melancholy alarm; the fact is he had a very narrow escape:—

That you were born a Dory, John,
Was Nature's act of grace.
Be grateful in your glory, John,
You might have been a plaice.

Your figure, far from pursy, John,
Shows Nature had designed
A flat fish, and in mercy, John,
She boldly changed her mind.

Your look, like death-doomed wretch's, John,
Methinks I read aright;
You saw her early sketches, John,
And can't forget your fright.

Very, very little more compression from Nature's shaping hand, and John had assuredly been a flat fish; even now he finds it tiring to swim upright, and is in the habit of leaning up against something to rest: clear indication that more ballast would be acceptable.

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The roedeer shed their horns about Christmas time; having strong bias in favour of a woodland residence, and dining frugally off twigs, bark, ivy, and other evergreens, the roe is even less visible to man in winter than at other seasons of the year. If the snow lie deep on the hills, the red deer, emboldened by hunger, come down to forage on the low grounds. If not provided with hay under these circumstances they will raid the crofters' gardens and revel in turnips and potatoes. Mr. Allan Gordon Cameron, one of our best authorities on the red deer, says that if they once acquire a taste for these dainties they will "go through fire and water" to get them.



"JOHN."

Snow occasionally gets the hare into a curious difficulty; it gathers on the long hair of her under parts and forms into hard balls, of which the animal cannot rid herself; hares thus encumbered with snowballs have been picked up by hand. I remember finding a Skye terrier on a doorstep in Perth in exactly the same case one day when the snow lay deep. Each tag of long hair from his chest to his tail had its pendent snowball, and the unfortunate little dog had lain down in the doorway unable to struggle any farther. The only bird who enjoys a snowstorm is the thoughtless, improvident sparrow; he seems to think the whirling flakes were sent for his special delectation, and amuses himself by catching them as they float. Let it be said on the sparrow's behalf that with all his faults he is a cleanly little vagabond; he takes his cold tub in winter as cheerfully as his dust bath in the height of summer.



"SPARROWS AT PLAY."

N.B.—CLOSE SEASON FOR TROUT IN SCOTLAND.—In the October "Calendar" it was stated that the trout in Scottish rivers enjoy "no season of rest." This statement was correct at the time the "Calendar" was written: but has, happily, been rendered incorrect by the passing of the "Fresh Water Fish (Scotland) Act of 1902," which came into operation on 15th October last and secures for Scottish trout a close season from 15th October till 28th February, practically the spawning season. The author of the "Calendar" apologizes to readers of THE STRAND MAGAZINE for his omission to make the needful correction.

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The Sorceress of the Strand.

By L. T. Meade and Robert Eustace.

III.—THE FACE OF THE ABBOT.

IF Madame Sara had one prerogative more than another it was that of taking people unawares. When least expected she would spring a mine at your feet, engulf you in a most horrible danger, stab you in the dark, or injure you through your best friend; in short, this dangerous woman was likely to become the terror of London if steps were not soon taken to place her in such confinement that her genius could no longer assert itself.

Months went by after my last adventure. Once again my fears slumbered. Madame Sara's was not the first name that I thought of when I awoke in the morning, nor the last to visit my dreams at night. Absorbed in my profession, I had little time to waste upon her. After all, I made up my mind, she might have left London; she might have carried her machinations, her cruelties, and her genius elsewhere.

That such was not the case this story quickly shows.

The matter which brought Madame Sara once again to the fore began in the following way.

On the 17th of July, 1900, I received a letter; it ran as follows:—

"23, West Terrace,

"Charlton Road, Putney.

"Dear Mr. Druce,—I am in considerable difficulty and am writing to beg for your advice. My father died a fortnight ago at his castle in Portugal, leaving me his heiress. His brother-in-law, who lived there with him, arrived in London yesterday and came to see me, bringing me full details of my father's death. These are in the last degree mysterious and terrifying. There are also a lot of business affairs to arrange. I know little about business and should greatly value your advice on the whole situation. Can you come here and see me to-morrow at three o'clock? Senhor de Castro, my uncle, my mother's brother, will be here, and I should like you to meet him. If you can come I shall be very grateful.—Yours sincerely,

"Helen Sherwood."

I replied to this letter by telegram:—

"Will be with you at three to-morrow."

Helen Sherwood was an old friend of mine; that is, I had known her since she was a child. She was now about twenty-three years of age, and was engaged to a certain Godfrey Despard, one of the best fellows I ever met. Despard was employed in a merchant's office in Shanghai, and the chance of immediate marriage was small. Nevertheless, the young people were determined to be true to each other and to wait that turn in the tide which comes to most people who watch for it.

Helen's life had been a sad one. Her mother, a Portuguese lady of good family, had died at her birth; her father, Henry Sherwood, had gone to Lisbon in 1860 as one of the Under-Secretaries to the Embassy and never cared to return to England. After the death of his wife he had lived as an eccentric recluse. When Helen was three years old he had sent her home, and she had been brought up by a maiden aunt of her father's, who had never understood the impulsive, eager girl, and had treated her with a rare want of sympathy. This woman had died when her young charge was sixteen



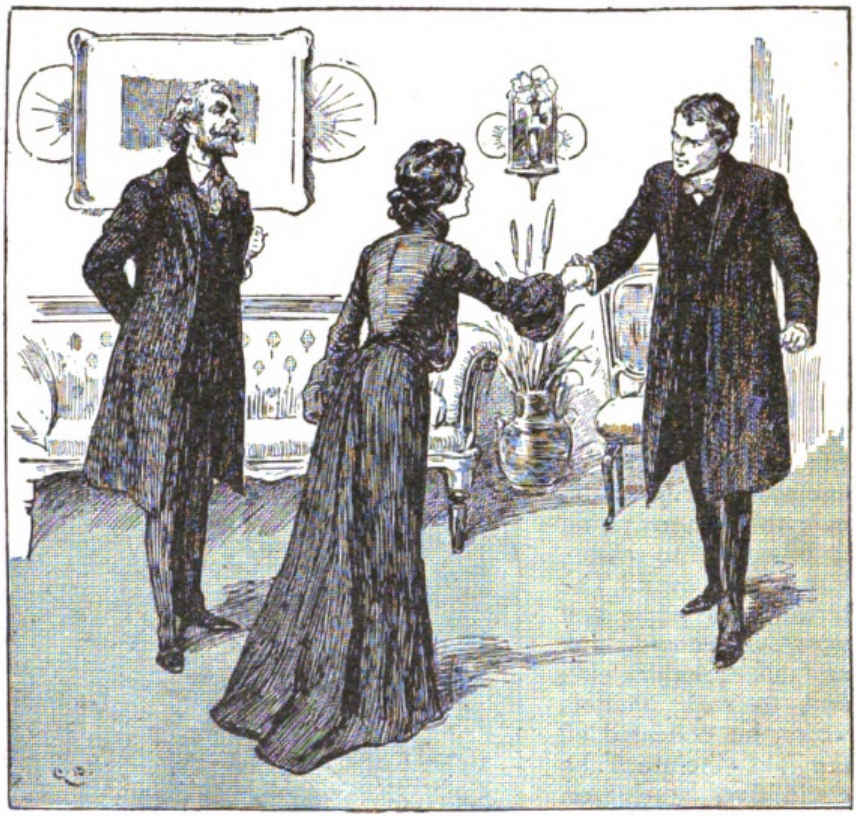
"SHE TREATED HER WITH A RARE WANT OF SYMPATHY."

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years of age. She had left no money behind her, and, as her father declined to devote one penny to his daughter's maintenance, Helen had to face the world before her education was finished. But her character was full of spirit and determination. She stayed on at school as pupil teacher, and afterwards supported herself by her attainments. She was a good linguist, a clever musician, and had one of the most charming voices I ever heard in an amateur. When this story opens she was earning a comfortable independence, and was even saving a little money for that distant date when she would marry the man she loved.

Meanwhile Sherwood's career was an extraordinary one. He had an extreme stroke of fortune in drawing the first prize of the Grand Christmas State Lottery in Lisbon, amounting to one hundred and fifty million reis, representing in English money thirty thousand pounds. With this sum he bought an old castle in the Estrella Mountains, and, accompanied by his wife's brother, a certain Petro de Castro, went there to live. He was hated by his fellow-men and, with the exception of De Castro, he had no friends. The old castle was said to be of extraordinary beauty, and was known as Castello Mondego. It was situated some twenty miles beyond the old Portuguese town of Coimbra. The historical accounts of the place were full of interest, and its situation was marvellously romantic, being built on the heights above the Mondego River. The castle dated from the twelfth century, and had seen brave and violent deeds. It was supposed to be haunted by an old monk who was said to have been murdered there, but within living memory no one had seen him. At least, so Helen had informed me.

Punctually at three o'clock on the following day I found myself at West Terrace, and was shown into my young friend's pretty little sitting-room.



"'HOW KIND OF YOU TO COME, MR. DRUCE,' SHE SAID."

"How kind of you to come, Mr. Druce!" she said. "May I introduce you to my uncle, Senhor de Castro?"

The Senhor, a fine-looking man, who spoke English remarkably well, bowed, gave a gracious smile, and immediately entered into conversation. His face had strong features; his beard was iron-grey, so also were his hair and moustache. He was slightly bald about the temples. I imagined him to be a man about forty-five years of age.

"Now," said Helen, after we had talked to each other for a few minutes, "perhaps, Uncle Petro, you will explain to Mr. Druce what has happened."

As she spoke I noticed that her face was very pale and that her lips slightly trembled.

"It is a painful story," said the Portuguese, "most horrible and inexplicable."

I prepared myself to listen, and he continued:—

"For the last few months my dear friend had been troubled in his mind. The reason appeared to me extraordinary. I knew that Sherwood was eccentric, but he was also matter-of-fact, and I should have thought him the last man who would be likely to be a prey to nervous terrors. Nevertheless, such was the case. The old castle has

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the reputation of being haunted, and the apparition that is supposed to trouble Mondego is that of a ghastly white face that is now and then seen at night peering out through some of the windows or one of the embrasures of the battlements surrounding the courtyard. It is said to be the shade of an abbot who was foully murdered there by a Castilian nobleman who owned the castle a hundred years ago.

"It was late in April of this year when my brother-in-law first declared that he saw the apparition. I shall never forget his terror. He came to me in my room, woke me, and pointed out the embrasure where he had seen it. He described it as a black figure leaning out of a window, with an appallingly horrible white face, with wide-open eyes apparently staring at nothing. I argued with him and tried to appeal to his common sense, and did everything in my power to bring him to reason, but without avail. The terror grew worse and worse. He could think and talk of nothing else, and, to make matters worse, he collected all the old literature he could find bearing on the legend. This he would read, and repeat the ghastly information to me at meal times. I began to fear that his mind would become affected, and three weeks ago I persuaded him to come away with me for a change to Lisbon. He agreed, but the very night before we were to leave I was awakened in the small hours by hearing an awful cry, followed by another, and then the sound of my own name. I ran out into the courtyard and looked up at the battlements. There I saw, to my horror, my brother-in-law rushing along the edge, screaming as though in extreme terror, and evidently imagining that he was pursued by something. The next moment he dashed headlong down a hundred feet on to the flagstones by my side, dying instantaneously. Now comes the most horrible part. As I glanced up I saw, and I swear it with as much certainty as I am now speaking to you, a black figure leaning out over the battlement exactly at the spot from which he had fallen—a figure with a ghastly white face, which stared straight down at me. The moon was full, and gave the face a clearness that was unmistakable. It was large, round, and smooth, white with a whiteness I had never seen on human face, with eyes widely open, and a fixed stare; the face was rigid and tense; the mouth shut and drawn at the corners. Fleeting as the glance was, for it vanished almost the next moment, I shall never forget it. It is indelibly imprinted on my memory."



"HE DASHED HEADLONG DOWN."

He ceased speaking.

From my long and constant contact with men and their affairs, I knew at once that what De Castro had just said instantly raised the whole matter out of the commonplace; true or untrue, real or false, serious issues were at stake.

"Who else was in the castle that night?" I asked.

"No one," was his instant reply. "Not even old Gonsalves, our one

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man-servant. He had gone to visit his people in the mountains about ten miles off. We were absolutely alone."

"You know Mr. Sherwood's affairs pretty well?" I went on. "On the supposition of trickery, could there be any motive that you know of for anyone to play such a ghastly trick?"

"Absolutely none."

"You never saw the apparition before this occasion?"

"Never."

"And what were your next steps?"

"There was nothing to be done except to carry poor Sherwood indoors. He was buried on the following day. I made every effort to have a systematic inquiry set on foot, but the castle is in a remote spot and the authorities are slow to move. The Portuguese doctor gave his sanction to the burial after a formal inquiry. Deceased was testified as having committed suicide while temporarily insane, but to investigate the apparition they absolutely declined."

"And now," I said, "will you tell me what you can with regard to the disposition of the property?"

"The will is a very remarkable one," replied De Castro. "Senhor Sousa, my brother-in-law's lawyer, holds it. Sherwood died a much richer man than I had any idea of. This was owing to some very successful speculations. The real and personal estate amounts to seventy thousand pounds, but the terms of the will are eccentric. Henry Sherwood's passionate affection for the old castle was quite morbid, and the gist of the conditions of the will is this: Helen is to live on the property, and if she does, and as long as she does, she is to receive the full interest on forty thousand pounds, which is now invested in good English securities. Failing this condition, the property is to be sold, and the said forty thousand pounds is to go to a Portuguese charity in Lisbon. I also have a personal interest in the will. This I knew from Sherwood himself. He told me that his firm intention was to retain the castle in the family for his daughter, and for her son if she married. He earnestly begged of me to promote his wishes in the event of his dying. I was not to leave a stone unturned to persuade Helen to live at the castle, and in order to ensure my carrying out his wishes he bequeathed to me the sum of ten thousand pounds provided Helen lives at Castello Mondego. If she does not do so I lose the money. Hence my presence here and my own personal anxiety to clear up the mystery of my friend's death, and to see my niece installed as owner of the most lovely and romantic property in the Peninsula. It has, of course, been my duty to give a true account of the mystery surrounding my unhappy brother-in-law's death, and I sincerely trust that a solution to this terrible mystery will be found, and that Helen will enter into her beautiful possessions with all confidence."

"The terms of the will are truly eccentric," I said. Then turning to Helen I added:—

"Surely you can have no fear in living at Castello Mondego when it would be the means of bringing about the desire of your heart?"

"Does that mean that you are engaged to be married, Helen?" asked De Castro.

"It does," she replied. Then she turned to me. "I am only human, and a woman. I could not live at Castello Mondego with this mystery unexplained; but I am willing to take every step—yes, *every* step, to find out the truth."

"Let me think over the case," I said, after a pause. "Perhaps I may be able to devise some plan for clearing up this unaccountable matter. There is no man in the whole of London better fitted to grapple with the mystery than I, for it is, so to speak, my profession."

"You will please see in me your hearty collaborator, Mr. Druce," said Senhor de Castro.

"When do you propose to return to Portugal?" I asked.

"As soon as I possibly can."

"Where are you staying now?"

"At the Cecil."

He stood up as he spoke.

"I am sorry to have to run away," he said. "I promised to meet a friend, a lady, in half an hour from now. She is a very busy woman, and I must not keep her waiting."

His words were commonplace enough, but I noticed a queer change in his face. His eyes grew full of eagerness, and yet—was it possible?—a curious fear seemed also to fill them. He shook hands with Helen, bowed to me, and hurriedly left the room.

"I wonder whom he is going to meet," she said, glancing out of the window and watching his figure as he walked down the street. "He told me when he first came that he had an interview pending of a very important character. But, there, I must not keep you, Mr. Druce; you are also a very busy man. Before you go, however, do tell me what you think of the whole thing. I certainly cannot

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live at the castle while that ghastly face is unexplained; but at the same time I do not wish to give up the property."

"You shall live there, enjoy the property, and be happy," I answered. "I will think over everything; I am certain we shall see a way out of the mystery."

I wrung her hand and hurried away.

During the remainder of the evening this extraordinary case occupied my thoughts to the exclusion of almost everything else. I made up my mind to take it up, to set every inquiry on foot, and, above all things, to ascertain if there was a physical reason for the apparition's appearance; in short, if Mr. Sherwood's awful death was for the benefit of any living person. But I must confess that, think as I would, I could not see the slightest daylight until I remembered the curious expression of De Castro's face when he spoke of his appointment with a lady. The man had undoubtedly his weak point; he had his own private personal fear. What was its nature?

I made a note of the circumstance and determined to speak to Vandeleur about it when I had a chance.

The next morning one of the directors of our agency called. He and I had a long talk over business matters, and when he was leaving he asked me when I wished to take my holiday.

"If you like to go away for a fortnight or three weeks, now is your time," was his final remark.

I answered without a moment's hesitation that I should wish to go to Portugal, and would take advantage of the leave of absence which he offered me.

Now, it had never occurred to me to think of visiting Portugal until that moment; but so strongly did the idea now take possession of me that I went at once to the Cecil and had an interview with De Castro. I told him that I could not fulfil my promise to Miss Sherwood without being on the spot, and I should therefore accompany him when he returned to Lisbon. His face expressed genuine delight, and before we parted we arranged to meet at Charing Cross on the morning after the morrow. I then hastened to Putney to inform Helen Sherwood of my intention.

To my surprise I saw her busy placing different articles of her wardrobe in a large trunk which occupied the place of honour in the centre of the little sitting-room.

"What are you doing?" I cried.

She coloured.

"You must not scold me," she said. "There is only one thing to do, and I made up my mind this morning to do it. The day after to-morrow I am going to Lisbon. I mean to investigate the mystery for myself."

"You are a good, brave girl," I cried. "But listen, Helen; it is not necessary."



"'YOU MUST NOT SCOLD ME,' SHE SAID."

I then told her that I had unexpectedly obtained a few weeks' holiday, and that I intended to devote the time to her service.

"Better and better," she cried. "I go with you. Nothing could have been planned more advantageously for me."

"What put the idea into your head?" I asked.

"It isn't my own," she said. "I spent a dreadful night, and this morning, soon after ten o'clock, I had an unexpected visitor. She is not a stranger to me, although I have never mentioned her name. She is known as Madame Sara, and is——"

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"My dear Helen!" I cried. "You don't mean to tell me you know that woman? She is one of the most unscrupulous in the whole of London. You must have nothing to do with her—nothing whatever."

Helen opened her eyes to their widest extent.

"You misjudge Madame Sara," she said. "I have known her for the last few years, and she has been a most kind friend to me. She has got me more than one good post as teacher, and I have always felt a warm admiration for her. She is, beyond doubt, the most unselfish woman I ever met."

I shook my head.

"You will not get me to alter my opinion of her," continued Helen. "Think of her kindness in calling to see me to-day. She drove here this morning just because she happened to see my uncle, Petro de Castro, yesterday. She has known him, too, for some time. She had a talk with him about me, and he told her all about the strange will. She was immensely interested, and said that it was imperative for me to investigate the matter myself. She spoke in the most sensible way, and said finally that she would not leave me until I had promised to go to Portugal to visit the castle, and in my own person to unearth the mystery. I promised her and felt she was right. I am keeping my word."

When Helen had done speaking I remained silent. I could scarcely describe the strange sensation which visited me. Was it possible that the fear which I had seen so strongly depicted on De Castro's face was caused by Madame Sara? Was the mystery in the old Portuguese castle also connected with this terrible woman? If so, what dreadful revelations might not be before us! Helen was not the first innocent girl who believed in Madame, and not the first whose life was threatened.

"Why don't you speak, Mr. Druce?" she asked me at last. "What are you thinking of?"

"I would rather not say what I am thinking of," I answered; "but I am very glad of one thing, and that is that I am going with you."

"You are my kindest, best friend," she said; "and now I will tell you one thing more. Madame said that the fact of your being one of the party put all danger out of the case so far as I was concerned, for she knew you to be the cleverest man she ever met."

"Ah!" I replied, slowly, "there is a cleverer man than I, and his name is Eric Vandeleur. Did she happen to speak of him?"

"No. Who is he? I have never heard of him."

"I will tell you some day," I replied, "but not now."

I rose, bade her a hasty good-bye, and went straight to Vandeleur's rooms.

Whatever happened, I had made up my mind to consult him in the matter. He was out when I called, but I left a note, and he came round to my place in the course of the evening.

In less than a quarter of an hour I put him in possession of all the facts. He received my story in silence.

"Well!" I cried at last. "What do you think?"

"There is but one conclusion, Druce," was his reply. "There is a motive in this mystery—method in this madness. Madame is mixed up in it. That being the case, anything supernatural is out of the question. I am sorry Miss Sherwood is going to Lisbon, but the fact that you are going too may be her protection. Beyond doubt her life is in danger. Well, you must do your best, and forewarned is forearmed. I should like to go with you, but I cannot. Perhaps I may do more good here watching the arch-fiend who is pulling the strings."

De Castro took the information quietly that his niece was about to accompany us.

"Women are strange creatures," he said. "Who would suppose that a delicate girl would subject herself to the nervous terrors she must undergo in the castle? Well, let her come—it may be best, and my friend, the lady about whom I spoke to you, recommended it."

"You mean Madame Sara?" I said.

"Ah!" he answered, with a start. "Do you know her?"

"Slightly," I replied, in a guarded tone. Then I turned the conversation.

Our journey took place without adventure, and when we got to Lisbon we put up at Durrand's Hotel.

On the afternoon of that same day we went to interview Manuel Sousa, the lawyer who had charge of Mr. Sherwood's affairs. His office was in the Rue do Rio Janeiro. He was a short, bright-eyed little man, having every appearance of honesty and ability. He received us affably and looked with much interest at Helen Sherwood, whose calm, brave face and English appearance impressed him favourably.

"So you have come all this long way,

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"'YOU MEAN MADAME SARA?' I SAID."

Senhora," he said, "to investigate the mystery of your poor father's death? Be assured I will do everything in my power to help you. And now you would all like to see the documents and papers. Here they are at your service."

He opened a tin box and lifted out a pile of papers. Helen went up to one of the windows.

"I don't understand Portuguese," she said. "You will examine them for me, won't you, Uncle Petro, and you also, Mr. Druce?"

I had a sufficient knowledge of Portuguese to be able to read the will, and I quickly discovered that De Castro's account of it was quite correct.

"Is it your intention to go to Castello Mondego?" asked the lawyer, when our interview was coming to an end.

"I can answer for myself that I intend to go," I replied.

"It will give me great pleasure to take Mr. Druce to that romantic spot," said De Castro.

"And I go with you," cried Helen.

"My dear, dear young lady," said the lawyer, a flicker of concern crossing his bright eyes, "is that necessary? You will find the castle very lonely and not prepared for the reception of a lady."

"Even so, I have come all this long way to visit it," replied Helen. "I go with my friend, Mr. Druce, and with my uncle, and so far as I am concerned the sooner we get there the better."

The lawyer held up his hands.

"I wouldn't sleep in that place," he exclaimed, "for twenty contos of reis."

"Then you really believe in the apparition?" I said. "You think it is supernatural?"

He involuntarily crossed himself.

"The tale is an old one," he said. "It has been known for a hundred years that the castle is haunted by a monk who was treacherously murdered there. That is the reason, Miss Sherwood, why your father got it so cheap."

"Supernatural or not, I must get to the bottom of the thing," she said, in a low voice.

De Castro jumped up, an impatient expression crossing his face.

"If you don't want me for the present, Druce," he said, "I have some business of my own that I wish to attend to."

He left the office, and Helen and I were about to follow him when Senhor Sousa suddenly addressed me.

"By the way, Mr. Druce, I am given to understand that you are from the Solvency Inquiry Agency of London. I know that great business well; I presume, therefore, that matters of much interest depend upon this inquiry?"

"The interests are great," I replied, "but are in no way connected with my business. My motive in coming here is due to friendship. This young lady is engaged to be married to a special friend of mine, and I have known her personally from her childhood. If we can clear up the present mystery, Helen Sherwood's marriage can take place at once. If, on the other hand, that terror which hangs over Castello Mondego is so overpowering that Miss Sherwood cannot make up her mind to live there, a long separation awaits the young pair. I have answered

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your question, Senhor Sousa; will you, on your part, answer mine?"

"Certainly," he replied. His face looked keenly interested, and from time to time he glanced from Helen to me.

"Are you aware of the existence of any motive which would induce someone to personate the apparition and so bring about Mr. Sherwood's death?"

"I know of no such motive, my dear sir. Senhor de Castro will come into ten thousand pounds provided, and only provided, Miss Sherwood takes possession of the property. He is the one and only person who benefits under the will, except Miss Sherwood herself."

"We must, of course, exclude Senhor de Castro," I answered. "His conduct has been most honourable in the matter throughout; he might have been tempted to suppress the story of the ghost, which would have been to his obvious advantage. Is there no one else whom you can possibly suspect?"

"No one—absolutely no one."

"Very well; my course is clear. I have come here to get an explanation of the mystery. When it is explained Miss Sherwood will take possession of the castle."

"And should you fail, sir? Ghosts have a way of suppressing themselves when most earnestly desired to put in an appearance."

"I don't anticipate failure, Senhor Sousa, and I mean to go to the castle immediately."

"We are a superstitious race," he replied, "and I would not go there for any money you liked to offer me."

"I am an Englishman, and this lady is English on her father's side. We do not easily abandon a problem when we set to work to solve it."

"What do you think of it all?" asked Helen of me, when we found ourselves soon afterwards in the quaint, old-world streets.

"Think!" I answered. "Our course is clear. We have got to discover the motive. There must be a motive. There was someone who had a grudge against the old man, and who wished to terrify him out of the world. As to believing that the apparition is supernatural, I decline even to allow myself to consider it."

"Heaven grant that you may be right," she answered; "but I must say a strange and most unaccountable terror oppresses me whenever I conjure up that ghastly face."

"And yet you have the courage to go to the castle!"

"It is a case of duty, not of courage, Mr. Druce."

For the rest of that day I thought over the whole problem, looking at it from every point of view, trying to gaze at it with fresh eyes, endeavouring to discover the indiscoverable—the motive. There must be a motive. We should find it at the castle. We would go there on the morrow. But, no; undue haste was unnecessary. It might be well for me, helped as I should be by my own agency, a branch of which was to be found in Lisbon, to discover amongst the late Mr. Sherwood's acquaintances, friends, or relatives the motive that I wanted. My agents set to work for me, but though they did their utmost no discovery of the least value was found, and at the end of a week I told De Castro and Helen that I was ready to start.

"We will go early to-morrow morning," I said. "You must make all your preparations, Helen. It will take us the day to reach Castello Mondego. I hope that our work may be completed there, and that we may be back again in Lisbon within the week."

Helen's face lit up with a smile of genuine delight.

"The inaction of the last week has been terribly trying," she said. "But now that we are really going to get near the thing I feel quite cheerful."

"Your courage fills me with admiration," I could not help saying, and then I went out to make certain purchases. Amongst these were three revolvers—one for Helen, one for De Castro, and one for myself.

Afterwards I had an interview with Sousa, and took him as far as I could into my confidence.

"The danger of the supernatural is not worth considering," I said, "but the danger of treachery, of unknown motives, is considerable. I do not deny this fact for a moment. In case you get no tidings of us, come yourself or send some one to the castle within a week."

"This letter came for you by the last post," said Sousa, and he handed me one from Vandeleur.

I opened it and read as follows:—

"I met Madame Sara a week ago at the house of a friend. I spoke to her about Castello Mondego. She admitted that she was interested in it, that she knew Miss Sherwood, and hoped when she had taken possession to visit her in that romantic spot. I inquired further if she was aware of the contents of the strange will. She said she had heard of it. Her manner was perfectly frank, but I saw that she was uneasy. She

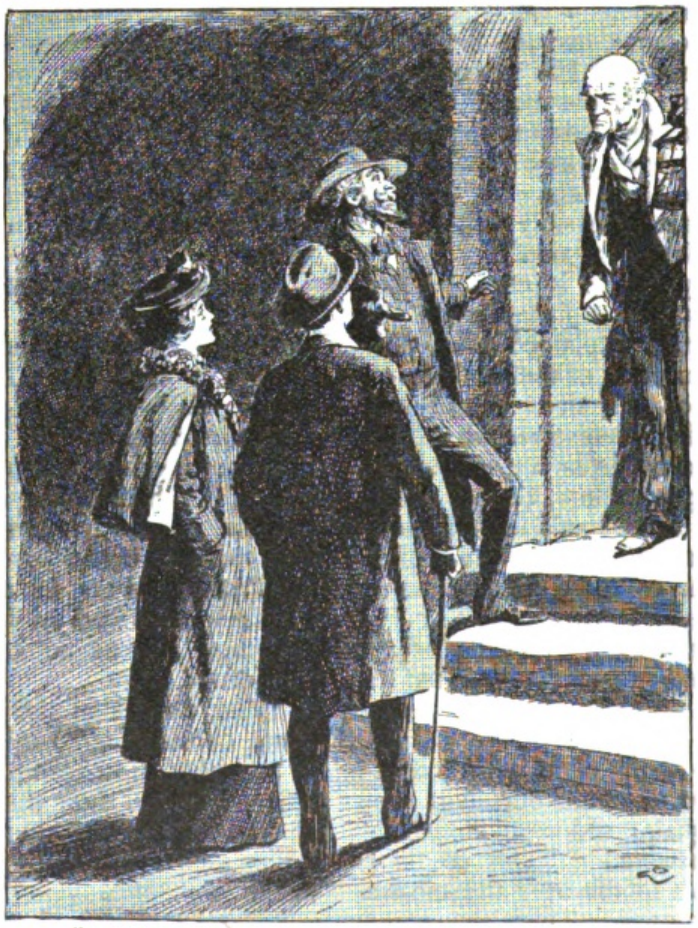
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took the first opportunity of leaving the house, and on making inquiries I hear that she left London by the first train this morning, *en route* for the Continent. These facts may mean a great deal, and I should advise you to be more than ever on your guard."

I put the letter into my pocket, got Sousa to promise all that was necessary, and went away.

At an early hour the following morning we left Rocio Station for Coimbra, and it was nearly seven in the evening when we finally came to the end of our railway journey and entered a light wagonette drawn by two powerful bay stallions for our twenty-mile drive to the castle.

The scenery as we approached the spurs of the Estrella was magnificent beyond description, and as I gazed up at the great peaks, now bathed in the purples and golds of the sunset, the magic and mystery of our strange mission became tenfold intensified. Presently the steep ascent began along a winding road between high walls that shut out our view, and by the time we reached the castle it was too dark to form any idea of its special features.



"A PHLEGMATIC-LOOKING MAN OPENED THE DOOR FOR US."

De Castro had already sent word of our probable arrival, and when we rang the bell at the old castle a phlegmatic-looking man opened the door for us.

"Ah, Gonsalves," cried De Castro, "here we are! I trust you have provided comfortable beds and a good meal, for we are all as hungry as hawks."

The old man shrugged his shoulders, raised his beetle-brows a trifle, and fixed his eyes on Helen with some astonishment. He muttered, in a Portuguese dialect which I did not in the least comprehend, something to De Castro, who professed himself satisfied. Then he said something further, and I noticed the face of my Portuguese friend turn pale.

"Gonsalves saw the spectre three nights ago," he remarked, turning to me. "It was leaning as usual out of one of the windows of the north-west turret. But, come; we must not terrify ourselves the moment we enter your future home, Niece Helen. You are doubtless hungry. Shall we go to the banqueting-hall?"

The supper prepared for us was not appetizing, consisting of some miserable goat-chops, and in the great hall, dimly lighted by a few candles in silver sconces, we could scarcely see each other's faces. As supper was coming to an end I made a suggestion.

"We have come here," I said, "on a serious matter. We propose to start an investigation of a very grave character. It is well known that ghosts prefer to reveal themselves to one man or woman alone, and not to a company. I propose, therefore, that we three should occupy rooms as far as possible each from the other in the castle, and that the windows of our three bedrooms should command the centre square."

De Castro shrugged his shoulders and a look of dismay spread for a moment over his face; but Helen fixed her great eyes on mine, her lips moved slightly as though she would speak, then she pulled herself together.

"You are right, Mr. Druce," she said. "Having come on this inquiry, we must fear nothing."

"Well, come at once, and we will choose

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our bedrooms. You as the lady shall have the first choice."

De Castro called Gonsalves, who appeared holding a lantern in his hand. A few words were said to the man in his own dialect, and he led the way, going up many stone stairs, down many others, and at last he flung open a huge oak door and we found ourselves in a vast chamber with five windows, all mullioned and sunk in deep recesses. On the floor was a heavy carpet. A four-post bedstead with velvet hangings was in a recess. The rest of the furniture was antique and massive, nearly black with age, but relieved by brass mountings, which, strange to say, were bright as though they had recently been rubbed.

"This was poor Sherwood's own bedroom," said De Castro. "Do you mind sleeping here?"

He turned to Helen.

"No, I should like it," she replied, emphatically.

"I am glad that this is your choice," he said, "for I don't believe, although I am a man and you are a woman, that I could myself endure this room. It was here I watched by his dead body. Ah, poor fellow, I loved him well."

"We won't talk of memories to-night," said Helen. "I am very tired, and I believe I shall sleep. Strange as it may sound, I am not afraid. Mr. Druce, where will you locate yourself? I should like, at least, to know what room you will be in."

I smiled at her. Her bravery astonished me. I selected a room at right angles to Helen's. Standing in one of her windows she could, if necessary, get a glimpse of me if I were to stand in one of mine.

De Castro chose a room equally far away from Helen's on the other side. We then both bade the girl good-night.

"I hate to leave her so far from help," I said, glancing at De Castro.

"Nothing will happen," he replied. "I can guarantee that. I am dead tired; the moment I lay my head on my pillow, ghost or no ghost, I shall sleep till morning."

He hurried off to his own room.

The chamber that I had selected was vast, lofty, and might have accommodated twenty people. I must have been more tired even than I knew, for I fell asleep when my head touched the pillow.

When I awoke it was dawn, and, eager to see my surroundings by the light of day, I sprang up, dressed, and went down to the courtyard. Three sides of this court were formed by the castle buildings, but along the fourth ran a low balustrade of stone. I sauntered towards it. I shall never forget the loveliness of the scene that met my eyes. I stood upon what was practically a terrace—a mere shelf on the scarping of rock on the side of a dizzy cliff that went down below me a sheer two thousand feet. The Mondego River ran with a swift rushing noise at the foot of the gorge, although at the height at which I stood it looked more like a thread of silver than anything else. Towering straight in front of me, solemnly up into the heavens, stood the great peak of the Serra da Estrella, from which in the rosy sunrise the morning clouds were rolling into gigantic white wreaths. Behind me was the great irregular pile of the castle, with its battlements, turrets, and cupolas, hoar and grey with the weight of centuries, but now transfigured and bathed in the golden light. I had just turned to glance at them when I saw De Castro approaching me.

"Surely," I said, "there never was such a beautiful place in the world before! We can never let it go out of the family. Helen shall live here."

De Castro came close to me; he took my arm, and pointed to a spot on the stone flags.

"On this very spot her father fell from the battlements above," he said, slowly.

I shuddered, and all pleasant thoughts were instantly dispelled by the memory of that hideous tragedy and the work we had still to do. It seemed impossible in this radiant, living sunlight to realize the horror that these walls had contained, and might still contain. At some of these very windows the ghastly face had appeared.

Helen, De Castro, and I spent the whole day exploring the castle. We went from dungeons to turrets, and made elaborate plans for alternate nightly vigils. One of the first things that I insisted on was that Gonsalves should not sleep in the castle at night. This was easily arranged, the old man having friends in the neighbouring village. Thus the only people in the castle after nightfall would be De Castro, Helen, and myself.

After we had locked old Gonsalves out and had raised the portcullis, we again went the complete round of the entire place. Thus we ensured that no one else could be hiding in the precincts. Finally we placed across every entrance thin silken threads, which would be broken if anyone attempted to pass them.

Helen was extremely anxious that the night should be divided into three portions, and that she should share the vigils; but this both De Castro and I prohibited.

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"At least for to-night," I said. "Sleep soundly; trust the matter to us. Believe me, this will be best. All arrangements are made. Your uncle will patrol until one o'clock in the morning, then I will go on duty."

This plan was evidently most repugnant to her, and when De Castro left the room she came up and began to plead with me.

"I have a strange and overpowering sensation of terror," she said. "Fight as I will, I cannot get rid of it. I would much rather be up than in that terrible room. I slept last night because I was too weary to do anything else, but I am wakeful to-night, and I shall not close my eyes. Let me share your watch at least. Let us pace the courtyard side by side."

"No," I answered, "that would not do. If two of us are together the ghost, or whatever human being poses as the ghost, will not dare to put in an appearance. We must abide by our terrible mission, Helen; each must watch alone. You will go to bed now, like a good girl, and to-morrow night, if we have not then discovered anything, you will be allowed to take your share in the night watch."

"Very well," she answered.

She sighed impatiently, and after a moment she said:—

"I have a premonition that something will happen to-night. As a rule my premonitions come right."

I made no answer, but I could not help giving her a startled glance. It is one thing to be devoid of ghostly terrors when living in practical London, surrounded by the world and the ways of men, but it is another thing to be proof against the strange terror which visits all human beings more or less when they are alone, when it is night, when the heart beats low. Then we are apt to have distorted visions, our mental equilibrium is upset, and we fear we know not what.

Helen and I knew that there was something to fear, and as our eyes met we dared not speak of what was uppermost in our thoughts. I could not find De Castro, and presumed that he had taken up his watch without further ado. I therefore retired to my own room and prepared to sleep. But the wakefulness which had seized Helen was also mine, for when the Portuguese entered my bedroom at one o'clock I was wide awake.

"You have seen nothing?" I said to him.

"Nothing," he answered, cheerfully. "The moon is bright, the night is glorious. It is my opinion that the apparition will not appear."

"I will take the precaution to put this in my pocket," I said, and I took up my revolver, which was loaded.

As I stepped out into the courtyard I found that the brilliant moonlight had lit up the north-west wall and the turrets; but the sharp black shadow of the south wall lay diagonally across the yard. Absolute stillness reigned, broken only by the croaking of thousands of frogs from the valley below. I sat down on a stone bench by the balustrade and tried to analyze my feelings. For a time the cheerfulness which I had seen so marked on De Castro's face seemed to have communicated itself to me; my late fears vanished, I was not even nervous, I found it difficult to concentrate my thoughts on the object which had brought me so far from England. My mind wandered back to London and to my work there. But by degrees, as the chill stole over me and the stillness of night began to embrace me, I found myself glancing ever and again at those countless windows and deep embrasures, while a queer, overpowering tension began to be felt, and against my own will a terror, strange and humiliating, overpowered me. I knew that it was stronger than I, and, fight against it as I would, I could not overcome it. The instinctive dread of the unknown that is at the bottom of the bravest man's courage was over me. Each moment it increased, and I felt that if the hideous face were to appear at one of the windows I would not be answerable for my self-control. Suddenly, as I sat motionless, my eyes riveted on the windows of the old castle, I felt, or fancied I felt, that I was not alone. It seemed to me that a shadow moved down in the courtyard and close to me. I looked again; it was coming towards me. It was with difficulty I could suppress the scream which almost rose to my lips. The next instant I was glad that I had not lost my self-control, when the slim, cold hand of Helen Sherwood touched mine.

"Come," she said, softly.

She took my hand and, without a word, led me across the courtyard.

"Look up," she said.

I did look up, and then my heart seemed to stop and every muscle in my body grew rigid as though from extreme cold. At one of the first-floor windows in the north-west tower, there in the moonlight leant the apparition itself: a black, solemn figure—its arms crossed on the sill—a large, round face of waxy whiteness, features immobile and fixed in a hideous, unwinking stare right across the courtyard.

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My heart gave a stab of terror, then I remained absolutely rigid—I forgot the girl by my side in the wild beating of my pulse. It seemed to me that it must beat itself to death.

"Call my uncle," whispered Helen, and when I heard her voice I knew that the girl was more self-possessed than I was.

"Call him," she said again, "loudly—at once."

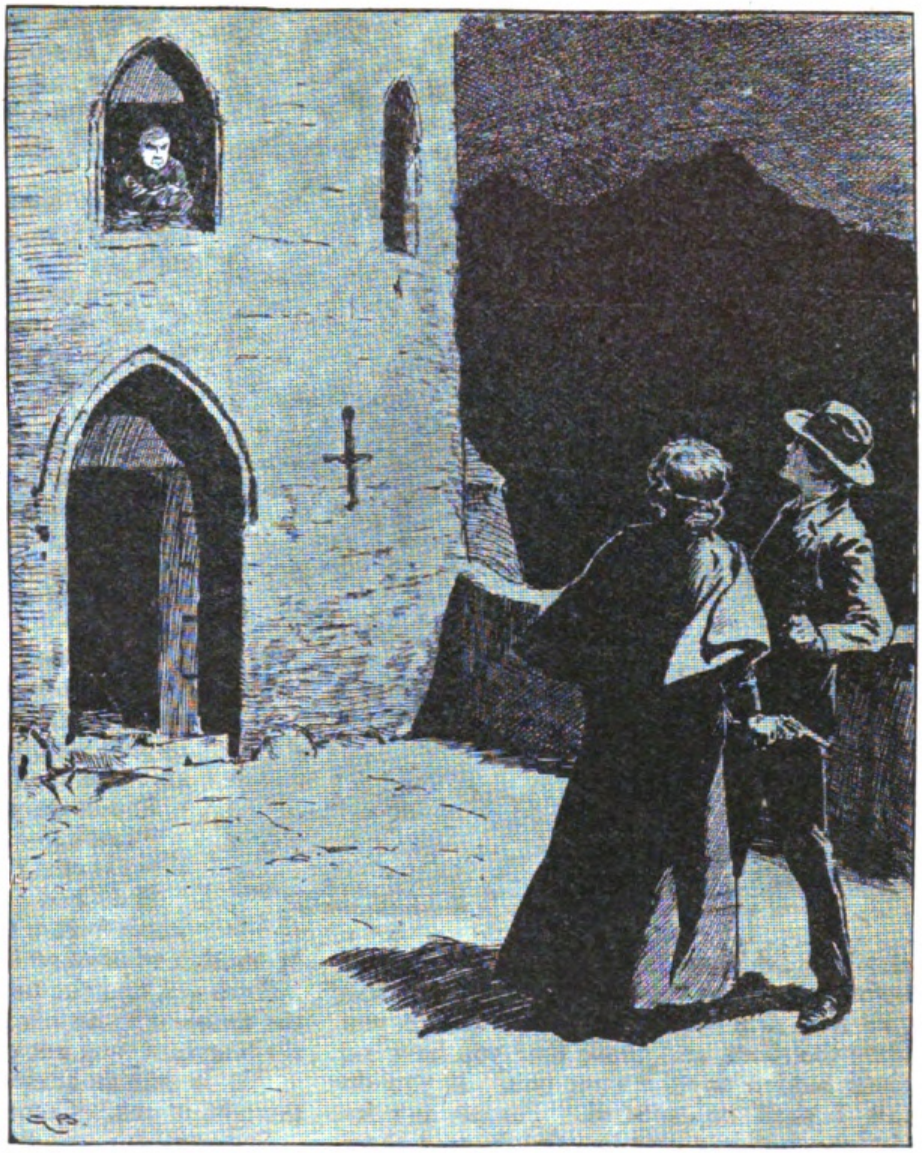
I shouted his name:—

"De Castro, De Castro; it is here!"

The figure vanished at my voice.

"Go," said Helen again. "Go; I will wait for you here. Follow it at once."

I rushed up the stairs towards the room where De Castro slept. I burst open his door. The room was empty. The next instant I heard his voice.



"THERE IN THE MOONLIGHT LEANT THE APPARITION ITSELF."

"I am here—here," he said. "Come at once—quick!"

In a moment I was at his side.

"This is the very room where it stood," I said.

I ran to the window and looked down. De Castro followed me. Helen had not moved. She was still gazing up—the moonlight fell full on her white face.

"You saw it too?" gasped De Castro.

"Yes," I said, "and so did Helen. It stood by this window."

"I was awake," he said, "and heard your shout. I rushed to my window; I saw the spectre distinctly, and followed it to this room. You swear you saw it? It was the face of the abbot."

My brain was working quickly, my courage was returning. The unfathomable terror of the night scene was leaving me. I took De Castro suddenly by both his arms and turned him round so that the moonlight should fall upon him.

"You and I are alone in this tower. Helen Sherwood is in the courtyard. There is not another living being in the whole castle. Now listen. There are only two possible explanations of what has just occurred. Either you are the spectre, or it is supernatural."

"I?" he cried. "Are you mad?"

"I well might be," I answered, bitterly. "But of this I am certain: you must prove to me whether you are the apparition or not. I make this suggestion now in order to clear you from all possible blame; I make it that we may have

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"EITHER YOU ARE THE SPECTRE, OR IT IS SUPERNATURAL."

absolute evidence that could not be upset before the most searching tribunal. Will you now strip before me?—yes, before you leave the room, and prove that you have no mask hidden anywhere on you. If you do this I shall be satisfied. Pardon my insistence, but in a case like the present there must be no loophole."

"Of course, I understand you," he said. "I will remove my clothes."

In five minutes he had undressed and dressed again. There was no treachery on his part. There was no mask nor any possible means of his simulating that face on his person.

"There is no suspicion about you," I said, almost with bitterness. "By heavens, I wish there were. The awfulness of this thing will drive me mad. Look at that girl standing by herself in the courtyard. I must return to her. Think of the courage of a woman who would stand there alone."

He made no answer. I saw that he was shivering.

"Why do you tremble?" I said, suddenly.

"Because of the nameless fear," he replied. "Remember I saw her father—I saw him with the terror on him—he ran along the battlements; he threw himself over—he died. He was dashed to pieces on the very spot where she is standing. Get her to come in, Druce."

"I will go and speak to her," I said.

I went back to the courtyard. I rejoined Helen, and in a few words told her what had occurred.

"You must come in now," I said. "You will catch your death of cold standing here."

She smiled, a slow, enigmatic sort of smile.

"I have not given up the solution yet," she said, "nor do I mean to."

As she spoke she took her revolver from her belt, and I saw that she was strangely excited. Her manner showed intense excitement, but no fear.

"I suspect foul play," she said. "As I stood here and watched you and Uncle Petro talking to each other by that window I felt convinced—I am more than ever convinced——"

She broke off suddenly.

"Look! — oh, Heaven, look! What is that?"

She had scarcely uttered the words before the same face appeared at another window to the right. Helen gave a sharp cry, and the next instant she covered the awful face with her revolver and fired. A shrill scream rang out on the night air.

"It is human after all," said Helen; "I thought it was. Come."

She rushed up the winding stairs; I followed. The door of the room where we had seen the spectre was open. We both dashed in. Beneath the window lay a dark, huddled heap with the moonlight shining on it, and staring up with the same wide-open eyes was the face of the abbot. Just for a moment neither Helen nor I dared to approach it, but after a time we cautiously drew near the dark mass. The figure never moved. I ran forward and stretched out my hand. Closer and closer I bent until my hand touched the face. It was human flesh and was still warm.

"Helen," I said, turning to the girl, "go at once and find your uncle."

But I had scarcely uttered the words before Helen burst into a low, choking laugh—the most fearful laugh I had ever heard.

"Look, look!" she said.

For before our eyes the face tilted, foreshortened, and vanished. We were both

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"BENEATH THE WINDOW LAY A DARK, HUDDLED HEAP."

gazing into the countenance of the man whom we knew as Petro de Castro. His face was bathed in blood and convulsed with pain. I lit the lantern, and as I once more approached I saw, lying on the ground by his side, something hairy which for an instant I did not recognise. The next moment I saw what it was—it explained everything. It was a wig. I bent still nearer, and the whole horrible deception became plain as daylight. For, painted upon the back of the man's perfectly bald head, painted with the most consummate skill, giving the startling illusion of depth and relief, and all the hideous expression that had terrified one man at least out of the world, was the face of the abbot. The wig had completely covered it, and so skilfully was it made that the keenest observer would never have suspected it was one, it being itself slightly bald in order to add to the deception.

There in that dim, bare room, in broken sentences, in a voice that failed as his life passed, De Castro faltered out the story of his sin.

"Yes," he said, "I have tried to deceive you, and Gonsalves aided me. I was mad to risk one more appearance. Bend nearer, both of you; I am dying. Listen.

"Upon this estate, not a league across the valley, I found six months ago alluvial gold in great quantities in the bed of the gully. In the 'Bibliotheca Publica' in Lisbon I had years before got accounts of mines worked by the Phœnicians, and was firmly persuaded that some of the gold still remained. I found it, and to get the full benefit of it I devised the ghastly scheme which you have just discovered. I knew that the castle was supposed to be haunted by the face of an old monk. Sherwood with all his peculiarities was superstitious. Very gradually I worked upon his fears, and then, when I thought the time ripe for my experiment, personated the apparition. It was I who flung him from the battlements with my own hand. I knew that the terms of the will would divert all suspicion from me, and had not your shot, Helen, been so true you would never have come here to live. Well, you have avenged your father and saved yourself at the same time. You will find in the safe in a corner of the banqueting-hall plans and maps of the exact spot where the gold is to be found. I could have worked there for years unsuspected. It is true that I should have lost ten thousand pounds, but I should have gained five times the amount. Between four and five months ago I went to see a special friend of mine in London. She is a woman who stands alone as one of the greatest criminals of her day. She promised at once to aid me, and she suggested, devised, and executed the whole scheme. She made the wig herself, with its strangely-bald appearance so deceptive to the ordinary eye, and she painted the awful face on my bald skull. When you searched me just now you suspected a mask, but I was safe from your detection. To remove or replace the wig was the work of an instant. The woman who had done all this was to share my spoils."

"Her name?" I cried.

"Sara, the Great, the Invincible," he murmured.

As he spoke the words he died.

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Darkest Siberia and Its Political Exiles.

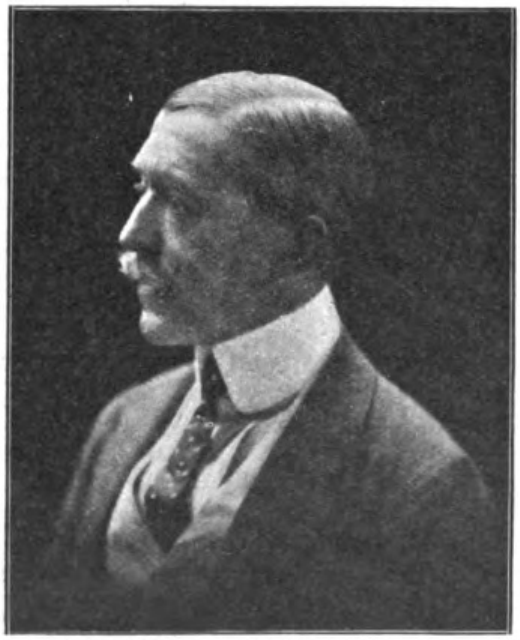
AN APPEAL TO CIVILIZATION.

By Harry de Windt.

Author of "Siberia As It Is," "The New Siberia," "Finland As It Is," etc.

Special Notice.—The information contained in the following article was chiefly obtained from Russian Government officials stationed at Sredni-Kolymsk, the facts furnished being afterwards verified, or otherwise, by the political exiles at the same place, by my request.

MY experience of Russian prisons dates from the year 1890. Mr. Kennan's report on the condition of the penal establishments of Siberia was then arousing indignation throughout civilized Europe, and his heartrending accounts of the sufferings endured by political and criminal offenders obviously called for some sort of an explanation from the Czar's Government. A mere denial of the charges would have been practically useless. A disinterested person was needed to report upon the prisons and "étapes," which had been described as hells upon earth, and to either confirm or gainsay the statements made by the American traveller. The evidence of a Russian subject would, for obvious reasons, have met with incredulity; and it came to pass, therefore, that, through the agency of Madame de Novikoff, herself a prison directress, I was selected for a task which, although intensely interesting, subjected me to a good deal of unfavourable criticism on my return to England. Some yellow journals even went so far as to suggest that I had received payment from the Russian Government for "whitewashing" its penal system. But I fancy the following article should conclusively disprove the existence of any monetary transactions, past or present, between the Czar's officials and myself, to say nothing of the fact that my favourable report on the prisons of Western Siberia has been endorsed by such reliable and well-known English travellers as Dr. Lansdell and Mr. J. Y. Simpson. In fairness, however, to Mr. Kennan, I should state that my inspection of the Tomsk Forwarding Prison and similar establishments was made fully five years after his visit.



MR. HARRY DE WINDT.
From a Photo. by Pach, New York.

In 1894 I again proceeded to Siberia (under similar conditions) to report upon the penal settlements on the Island of Sakhalin, the political prison of Akatui, and the mines, where only convict labour is employed, of Eastern Siberia. On this occasion I travelled from Japan to the Island of Sakhalin on board a Russian convict ship, a voyage which convinced me that the Russian criminal convict is as humanely treated and well cared for at sea as he is on land, which says a great deal. I have always maintained that were I sentenced to a term of penal servitude I would infinitely sooner serve it in Siberia than in England. It is not my intention, however, in the present article to deal with criminal convict life; but to describe, as accurately as I can, the life led by a handful of political exiles in the most remote Arctic settlement of Siberia. I may add that the members of my expedition were the first strangers from the outer world to visit the place in question for over thirty years.

There are now only two prisons throughout the Russian Empire where political offenders are actually incarcerated.* One is the Fortress of Schlüsselburg, on Lake Ladoga, within a short journey of St. Petersburg; the other the Siberian prison of Akatui, in the Trans-Baikal Province, about three hundred miles east of Irkutsk. Schlüsselburg I have never

* Political prisoners are no longer confined in the Fortress of SS. Peter and Paul. Short terms of imprisonment (previous to banishment to Siberia) are served in the citadels of Warsaw and other cities, but Schlüsselburg and Akatui are the only establishments now used as "political prisons."

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visited, but I was invited to inspect the prison of Akatui throughout, and also permitted to converse freely with the politicals within its walls. The majority were men of education, but dangerous conspirators, condemned, most of them, to long terms of penal servitude. The strictest prison discipline, hard labour in the silver mines, and association at night in public cells with the vilest criminals, was the lot of those whom I saw at Akatui. And yet I doubt if any of these men would willingly have exchanged places with their exiled comrades "domiciled," in comparative liberty, in Sredni-Kolymsk.

I have found that, as a rule, very erroneous impressions exist in England as to the conditions under which political offenders are sent to Siberia, a country which has often been greatly maligned by English novelists. For the Czar's great prison-land is not always a question of dungeons and life-long imprisonment. The latter certainly awaits the active revolutionist, but, on the other hand, an erring journalist may, for an "imprudent" paragraph, be sent to vegetate for only a couple of months within sight of the Urals. "The punishment fits the crime," and in the towns of Western Siberia I have frequently met men, originally banished for a short term, who, rather than return to Russia, have elected to remain in a land where living is cheaper and money more easily gained than at home.



MR. DE WINDT AS HE APPEARED WHEN RESCUED FROM THE SHORES OF BERING STRAITS—THE PARTY WERE ALMOST IN THE LAST EXTREMITY OF STARVATION.
From a Photo.

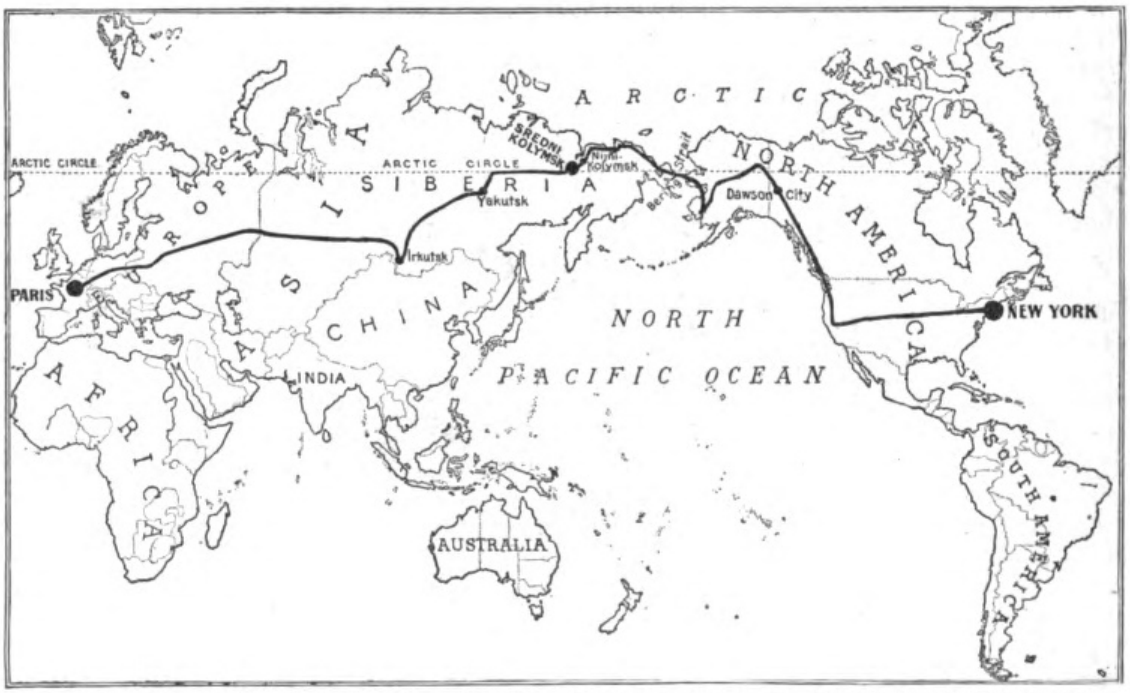
Let me now briefly describe the method of procedure in the case of a Russian subject who, for political reasons, has incurred the suspicion of the authorities. The exile of State offenders to Siberia is invariably carried out by what is called the "administrative process," or, in other words, by a secret tribunal composed of civil and military members. There are no Press reports of the trial, which is held strictly *in camera*, and, as a general rule, a political "suspect" vanishes as completely from the face of the earth as a pebble cast into the sea. Usually the blow falls unexpectedly. A man may be seated quietly at home with his family, in his office, or at some place of public entertainment when the fatal touch on the shoulder summons him away—perhaps for ever. The sentence once passed there is no appeal to a higher Court, nor can a prisoner hold any communication whatever with the outer world. A prisoner's relatives, therefore, frequently ascribe his absence to voluntary motives, and years sometimes elapse before the truth is known. Indeed, it may never reach his family, and the harassing thought that he is perhaps regarded by the latter as a heartless deserter has driven many a victim of the "administrative process" to suicide.

A term of imprisonment varying from six months to two years in a European fortress invariably precedes a term of exile, and this rule applies to both sexes. There are hundreds of towns and villages throughout Siberia where men and women are "domiciled" for various periods of their existence,

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but, as this article is descriptive only of the remoter settlements within the Arctic Circle, we will follow the footsteps of a political exile destined for, say, Sredni-Kolymsk. From the forwarding prison at Moscow to the city of Irkutsk in Eastern Siberia politicals not sent by rail travel with a criminal gang, wear prison dress, and live practically the same as ordinary convicts. At night-time, however, in the "étapes," * a separate cell is set apart for their use. On arrival at Irkutsk prison dress is discarded, and an exile may wear his own clothes, although he remains under lock and key and in close charge of the Cossack responsible for his safe arrival at their destination. In summer-time the two-thousand-mile journey to the first stage northward, Yakutsk, is made by river steamer, but during the winter months this dreary trip must be accomplished in uncovered sleighs, and is one of great severity and privation, especially for women. At Yakutsk a reindeer-sled conveys the ill-assorted pair ever northward for another six hundred miles to the settlement of Verkhoyansk, the coldest place in the world. Nearing the latter a steep and dangerous pass over the Verkhoyansk Mountains must be negotiated. In Switzerland the ascent would necessitate ropes and ice-axes; but delicate women, on their way to exile, are here compelled to clamber unassisted over giddy places that would try the nerves of an experienced mountaineer. From Verkhoyansk, a miserable village of log-huts, yet another weary stretch of twelve hundred miles brings the reindeer-sled to its destination, Sredni-Kolymsk, after a journey, entailing almost superhuman endurance, of eight thousand miles from Moscow. We accomplished this voyage, under favourable conditions, in a little over three months, but exiles travel so slowly that a year frequently elapses before they reach this "end of the end of the world." I should add that women never travel alone with a Cossack, but are always accompanied on the journey by another exile of their own sex.

My visit to Sredni-Kolymsk was a pure accident, and the result of a recent overland journey from Paris to New York. Had I chosen a different route (*viâ* Anadyrsk) to Bering Straits this story of human suffering would probably never have reached the ears of civilization. But Providence has willed it otherwise. A glance at the map will show the reader the position of the place, and about six hundred miles to the south-west of it he will observe (in most large English maps) a town inscribed as Zashiversk. The following incident, which I quote from Mr. Kennan, will give some idea of the almost incredible desolation of these parts of Siberia:—



MAP SHOWING THE ROUTE OF THE OVERLAND JOURNEY FROM PARIS TO NEW YORK—SREDNI-KOLYMSK WILL BE SEEN NEAR THE EXTREME NORTH.

"A few years ago the Governor-General

* Roadside prisons used in Siberia as rest-houses.

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of Siberia at Irkutsk ordered the removal of an exile named Schiller from that city to the town of Zashiversk, a town which was 'supposed to be' situated on the Indigirka River near the Arctic Circle. In the reign of the Empress Catherine Zashiversk was a prosperous fur-trading centre, but the place fell into decay and gradually ceased to exist. Nevertheless, its location is still marked on all Government maps, although the town was probably virtually extinct long before the beginning of the present century. Schiller, after having been carried three or four thousand miles up and down the rivers Lena and Indigirka in a vain search for a non-existent Arctic town, was finally brought back to Yakutsk, and a report was made to the Governor-General at Irkutsk that Zashiversk had, apparently, ceased to exist! The Governor-General thereupon ordered that the prisoner be taken to Sredni-Kolymsk, another town of forty-five houses situated on the River Kolyma, north of the Arctic Circle. When, after more than a year of travel, the unhappy Schiller reached this last outpost of the Czar in North-Eastern Asia and was set at liberty, he made his way to the log-church, entered the belfry, and proceeded to jangle the bells in a wild and erratic chime. When the settlers ran to the belfry in alarm and inquired the reason of the peal, Schiller replied with dignity that he wished the whole population to know that, by the grace of God, Hermann Schiller, after long and perilous wanderings, had reached in safety the town of Sredni-Kolymsk!" Months of fatigue, privation, and intolerable loneliness had deprived the poor fellow of his reason, a not unusual occurrence in this isolated portion of the great Russian Empire.



COSSACKS EMPLOYED IN TRANSPORTING EXILES TO SREDNI-KOLYMSK.
From a Photo. by Harry de Windt.

At Verkhoyansk, which is composed of a double row of dilapidated log-huts containing some three hundred souls, I imagined that we had reached the acme of desolation. The village stands in the centre of a bleak and barren plateau, bisected by the River Yana and surrounded by a belt of dark forest, which only accentuates the dull dreariness of the wintry landscape. We had travelled night and day for nearly a fortnight with reindeer from Yakutsk, across precipitous mountains, pathless forests, and deserts of snow, halting every hundred miles or so at some filthy rest-house, and suffering severely from hunger and the intense cold. I had, therefore, looked forward to Verkhoyansk as a haven of warmth and rest, but my one object, having reached the place, was to leave it with the utmost dispatch, even for the unknown perils and privations that might be in store for us in the great beyond. For it seemed to me that a more cheerless, God-forsaken spot could not exist on the face of this planet. But I had yet to see Sredni-Kolymsk.

We remained for three days here while fresh reindeer were procured for the long journey northward. A log hut was placed at our disposal by M. Katcheroffski, the chief of police, a kind and courteous host, who rendered valuable assistance to those survivors of the ill-fated *Jeanette* expedition who were enabled to reach here, half dead from cold and exposure, after the disaster on the Lena delta. Even the political exiles at Verkhoyansk, of whom there were under a score, had a good word for Katcheroffski, who is a gentleman and not a gaoler, like

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too many of his class. And yet Verkhoyansk must be a terrible abiding-place for civilized beings. Although Yakutsk bears the reputation, the former is undoubtedly the coldest place in Siberia, if not in the world. M. Abramovski, a Polish exile, who for some years past had kept a meteorological record, told me that careful observations showed a mean temperature for the whole year of four degrees below zero. In hard winters the thermometer fell repeatedly to seventy degrees below zero, and on one occasion touched minus eighty-one degrees Fahrenheit. During our stay in early March it only registered minus sixty-five degrees in Verkhoyansk itself, but at the first settlement we reached, two hundred miles distant, on our way north it fell to seventy-eight degrees below zero.



From a Photo. by] GENERAL VIEW OF THE CONVICT SETTLEMENT OF SREDNI-KOLYMSK. *[Harry de Windt.*

Abramovski had passed several years here, and his wife, a bright, pretty little woman, had voluntarily shared his exile, which was drawing to an end. According to Madame Abramovski, winter-time here is preferable to the summer months, which are cursed by intolerable heat and clouds of mosquitoes. There is also, during the winter, a monthly post from Yakutsk, while in the open season Verkhoyansk, like other Arctic settlements, is cut off from the outer world by unfordable rivers and leagues of swamp and impassable forest. Verkhoyansk is not unhealthy, and epidemics and pulmonary diseases are almost unknown, although during the spring and autumn rheumatism is prevalent.

But all the exiles here bitterly complained of the inadequate allowance for their maintenance made by the Government. Provisions of all kinds were so dear that life became one long struggle for existence. Abramovski had vainly tried to grow vegetables, but, although these thrive around Yakutsk, they obstinately refuse to appear in this ice-bound soil. Only Katcheroffski had succeeded in raising a few miserable cabbages, which were served at his table with as much ostentation as early strawberries or asparagus at home. Beef and deer-meat were unattainable luxuries, and horseflesh therefore proves the staple diet of the exiles in winter, when they cannot procure fish from the River Yana. But horseflesh is looked upon as a luxury by the Yakutes, and to my surprise many people here averred that they preferred it to reindeer, which is often ill-fed and therefore tough and stringy. Altogether Verkhoyansk may in many ways be likened to a paradise when compared to Sredni-Kolymsk, for literature, that golden lining to the cloud of every exile, is never lacking throughout the long winter darkness. I found the most recent works of Tolstoi, Zola, and Sienkiewicz in the small but well-stocked library, to say nothing of the translations of many English authors, ranging from Charles Dickens to Anthony Hope.

We left Verkhoyansk for the Arctic Ocean on the 2nd of March. I will not linger over that weary journey of twelve hundred miles, an account of which appears in the current number of *The Wide World Magazine.** For—

> League on league on league of desolation,
> Mile on mile on mile without a change,

* The Magazine named is publishing in a series of articles by Mr. Harry de Windt an account of the whole of his daring journey "Overland from Paris to New York," illustrated by the striking photographs taken *en route*.

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accurately and sufficiently describes the bleak and barren stretch of country which lies between Central Siberia and the shores of the Polar Sea. Nearing Sredni-Kolymsk the expedition would occasionally be brought to a standstill by the howling blizzards that sweep down from the Arctic, and would be compelled to halt, sometimes for a couple of days, seventy or eighty miles from the nearest shelter, until the gale moderated. Tainted fish or deer-meat was the only food obtainable in the filthy rest-houses, never less than two hundred miles apart. But if we suffered, as we undoubtedly did, during those twenty-six days of hunger and cold, what must this journey mean to poorly clad, ill-nourished women, who generally take three or four times as long to accomplish the distance?



MADAME AKIMOVA, WHO TRIED TO MURDER THE PRESENT CZAR, AND HER BABY.
From a Photo. by Harry de Windt.

At last, one morning early in April we reached Sredni-Kolymsk. It was a glorious day; one of those peculiar to the Arctic, when the pure, frosty air exhilarates like champagne, and snowy plain and rime-covered forest sparkle like diamonds in the dazzling sunshine under a sky of cloudless blue. But the sight of that dismal drab settlement and its sad associations seemed to suddenly depress the mind and spirits, and to darken the smiling face of Nature like a coffin which has been borne by mistake into a brilliant ball-room. Imagine a double row of log-huts, plastered with mud and lit by windows of ice, some of which, detached by the bright spring sunshine, have fallen to the ground. This avenue of hovels forms the main street, at one extremity of which stands a dilapidated wooden church and crowded graveyard, at the other the residence of the chief of police, the only decent and weather-proof building in the place. Picture a score of other dwellings, even more squalid than the rest, scattered around the village within an area of half a mile, and you have before you the last "civilized" outpost in North-Eastern Siberia: Sredni-Kolymsk. At first sight the place looked like a settlement deserted by trappers or some village cleared of every living soul by some deadly sickness—anything but the abode of human beings. For a while the sound of our bells attracted no attention, but presently skin-clad forms emerged here and there from the miserable huts, and haggard faces nodded a cheerless welcome as we drove through the village towards the police office. Here a hut was assigned to us, and we took up our residence for ten days in quarters colder and filthier than any we had occupied since leaving Yakutsk. And yet our lodgings were preferable to many of those occupied by the exiles.



ZIMMERMANN, WHO CONSPIRED TO BLOW UP THE GOVERNMENT WORKSHOPS WITH DYNAMITE.
From a Photo. by Harry de Windt.

Of the latter, who at the time of my visit numbered twelve men and two women, only two had been banished here for actual crime. One of these was Madame Akimova, who was found with explosives concealed about her person at the Coronation of Nicholas II., and the other Zimmermann, convicted of complicity in the destruction of the Government workshops at Lodz, by dynamite, a few years ago. I was informed by the officials that, with these two exceptions, the Sredni-Kolymsk exiles were guiltless of active participation in the revolutionary movement; and, indeed, most of them appeared to me to be quiet, intelligent men of moderate political views, who would probably have contributed to the welfare and prosperity of any country but their own. Only one or two openly professed what may be called anarchistic views, and these were young students, recent arrivals, who looked more like robbing an orchard than

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threatening a throne. So far as I could see, however, most of these so-called political offenders had been consigned to this living tomb merely for openly expressing opinions in favour of a Constitution and freedom of speech.

The most pitiable peculiarity about Sredni-Kolymsk is perhaps the morbid influence of the place and its surroundings on the mental powers. The first thing noticeable amongst those who had passed some years here was the utter vacancy of mind, even of men who, in Europe, had shone in the various professions. Amongst them was a well-known Polish author,* who, upon his arrival here only three years ago, set to work on an historical novel to lighten the leaden hours of exile. But in six months the work was thrown aside in disgust, and less than a year afterwards the writer's mind had become so unhinged by the maddening monotony of life that he would, in civilization, have been placed under restraint. I met also a once famous professor of anatomy (who had resided here for seven years), who seemed completely indifferent to the latest discoveries of medical and surgical science at home, and yet displayed an eager interest as to what was going on in the Paris music-halls. Indeed, I can safely state that, with three exceptions, there was not a perfectly sane man or woman amongst all the exiles I saw here. "A couple of years usually makes them shaky," said an official, "and the strongest-minded generally become childish when they have been here for five or six." "But why is it?" I asked. My friend walked to the window and pointed to the mournful, desolate street, the dismal drab hovels, and frozen, pine-fringed river darkening in the dusk. "That," he said, "and the awful silence—day after day, year after year, not a sound. I have stood in that street at midday and heard a watch tick in my pocket. Think of it, Mr. de Windt. I myself arrived here only a few months ago, but even I shall soon have to get away for a change, or——" and he tapped his forehead significantly.



A WELL-KNOWN POLISH WRITER, WHO WENT MAD IN EXILE.
From a Photo. by Harry de Windt.

The insanity so prevalent among the exiles of Sredni-Kolymsk is no doubt largely due to physical privation. When a man is banished for political reasons to Siberia his property is confiscated, to the uttermost farthing, by the Russian Government, which provides a fixed monthly allowance for his maintenance in exile. The sum differs in the various districts. At Verkhoyansk it is sixteen roubles a month; at Sredni-Kolymsk, nineteen roubles a month (about one pound sixteen shillings), although whether the extra six shillings is generously added to meet the increased cost of provisions twelve hundred miles farther north did not transpire. In any case, the allowance is absurdly inadequate, in a place where the necessaries of life are always at famine prices, by reason of the enormous distance of Sredni-Kolymsk from the nearest civilized centre, and the primitive mode of travel by which it is reached. During our stay here flour was selling at a rouble a pound and an abominable kind of brick tea at two roubles a pound, while candles, sugar, and salt cost exactly five times as much as at Yakutsk, where European prices are already trebled. The price of deer-meat is of course prohibitive, and the exiles were accordingly living, throughout the winter, upon fish caught the preceding summer, unsalted, and therefore putrid and quite unfit for human consumption. And this at midday was their sole nourishment, breakfast and supper consisting of one glass of weak tea and a diminutive piece of gritty black bread. Sugar was such a luxury that a lump was held in the teeth while the liquid was swallowed, one piece thus serving for several days in succession. Were house rent and clothing provided, even the miserable pittance paid by the Government might suffice to

* I was requested to suppress the name.

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keep body and soul together, but this is not the case. Some of the exiles were therefore occupying filthy and dilapidated sheds, that had been vacated even by Yakutes, while many were so poorly clad that in winter-time they were unable to leave the cheerless shelter of their draughty and malodorous huts.

The house occupied by M. Strajevsky, a Polish gentleman whose personality I shall always recall with sincere regard and sympathy, will serve as a type of the better class of dwelling occupied by the "political." It consisted of a low, mud-plastered log-hut, about twelve feet in height, the flat roof of which, however, overtopped the adjoining dwellings by several inches. Fourteen feet by ten was the measurement of the one room it contained, the walls of which were of rough-hewn logs and the floor of beaten earth, glistening with damp and greasy with the filth of years. A yellow light filtered dimly, even on the brightest day, through the slab of ice which formed the solitary window, but revealed only too clearly the miserable squalor of the room. Some planks on trestles covered with deer-skins formed my friend's sleeping-place, and more planks, strewn with books and writing materials, his table. An old kerosene tin was the only chair available, and, as I seated myself, my friend went to the mud fire-place and kindled a few sticks, which burned brightly for a few moments and then flickered out. Strajevsky then left the hut, climbed on to the roof, and blocked up the chimney with a bundle of rags. This, he explained, is the Yakute mode of warming an apartment, and is practised for economy, for Sredni-Kolymsk is near the tree-line, and firewood, like everything else, is an expensive article. But this method of obtaining warmth is scarcely a success, for we sat, during my visit, in an atmosphere of minus forty-seven degrees Fahrenheit by my thermometer. And in this miserable den Strajevsky, once a rising barrister at Warsaw, had passed eight of the best years of his life, and is still dragging out a dull, hopeless existence.

In summer-time the life here is perhaps less intolerable than during the winter, for the Kolyma River teems with fish, and edible roots and berries are obtainable in the woods around the settlement. Geese, duck, and other wildfowl are plentiful in the spring, and, as the use of firearms is not prohibited, game is at this season a welcome addition to a generally naked larder. Manual labour, too, is often procurable, for in addition to its exiles Sredni-Kolymsk has from three to four hundred inhabitants, consisting of officials, discharged criminal convicts (who have received a grant of land from the Government), and Yakute natives. In summer, therefore, an exile may earn a few roubles by fishing, trapping, wood-cutting, etc., but the dark winter months must be passed in a condition of inactive despair. During the latter season there are two mails from Russia, brought by the Cossacks in charge of the yearly consignment of exiles, but in the spring, summer, and early autumn Sredni-Kolymsk is as completely cut off from the outer world as a desert island in mid-ocean, by swamps and thousands of shallow lakes, which extend landwards on every side for hundreds of miles. A reindeer-sled skims rapidly over their frozen surface, but in the open season a traveller sinks knee-deep at every step, and progress becomes an impossibility.

Summer here is no glad season of sunshine and flowers, but only a few brief



From a Photo. by] THE OLD HOSPITAL OF SREDNI-KOLYMSK. *[Harry de Windt.*

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weeks of damp and cloudy weather. Even on fine days the sun looms through a curtain of mist; rainy weather prevails, and the leaky huts are sometimes flooded for days together by an incessant downpour. Swarms of mosquitoes and sand-flies add to the general discomfort, for there is no protection against these pests by night or day. There is much sickness at this season, especially a kind of low fever arising from damp dwellings and the miasma from the surrounding marshes. Epidemics are frequent, and during our visit small-pox was raging, chiefly, however, amongst the native population. Leprosy amongst the Yakutes is as prevalent here as in Central Asia, while the Russians suffer chiefly from bronchitis and diphtheria, which never fail to make their appearance with the return of spring. And yet in this hot-bed of pestilence there is no Government infirmary, or any provision whatsoever made for the sick. Miskiévitch, a young medical student, and himself an exile, was attending the community as efficiently as circumstances would permit, but an almost total lack of medical and surgical appliances rendered his task a hopeless one. I inquired for the old hospital, which I was told still existed, and was shown a barn-like construction, partly open to the winds, and occupied by a family of filthy but thriving Yakutes. The new infirmary, for which a large sum of money was voted in St. Petersburg ten years ago, adjoined the older building; but the former was still in its initial stage of foundations and four corner posts, where it will probably remain, the silent witness of a late Ispravnik's reign and rascality.



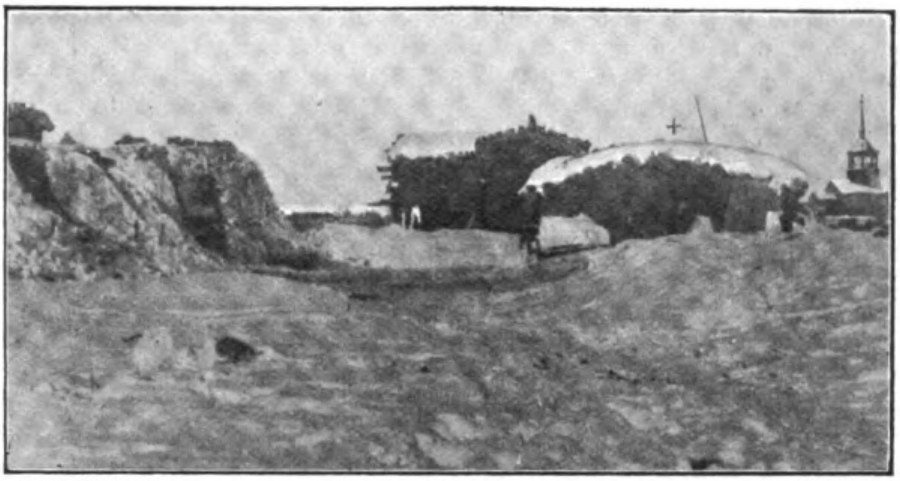
MISKIÉVITCH, THE DOCTOR OF THE SETTLEMENT, AND HIMSELF AN EXILE.
From a Photo. by Harry de Windt.

But there exists a mental disease far more dreaded than any bodily affliction, or than even death itself, by this little colony of martyrs. This is a form of hysteria, chiefly prevalent amongst women, and common to all persons, officials, exiles, and natives alike, who remain for any length of time in this Arctic Inferno. The attack is usually unexpected. A person hitherto perfectly calm and collected will suddenly commence to shout, sing, and dance without warning and at the most inopportune moment, and from that time the mind of the patient becomes permanently deranged. A curious phase of this mysterious disease is the irresistible impulse to imitate the voice and actions of others. Thus I witnessed a painful scene one evening in the hut of an exile who had assembled his comrades to meet me, and in the street one day a Russian woman born and bred here seized my arm and repeated, with weird accuracy, a sentence in French which I was addressing to my companion, the Vicomte de Clinchamp. This strange disease is quite unknown in other Siberian settlements, and is probably due to the intolerable climate and surroundings and, last but not least, to the eternal stillness and monotony of this hell upon earth. The malady would seem to be essentially local, for the daughter of a Sredni-Kolymsk official who was attacked by it immediately recovered on her removal to Yakutsk. On the other hand, sufferers compelled to remain here generally become after a few years hopelessly



THE GRAVE OF AN EXILE WHO WAS DRIVEN TO SUICIDE.
From a Photo. by Harry de Windt.

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From a Photo. by] MADAME AKIMOVA'S HUT. *[Harry de Windt.*

insane. In the opinion of Dr. Miskiévitch the affliction is chiefly due to total inertia of the reasoning faculties, which in time becomes a positive torture to the civilized mind.

There are many ways by which this evil could be remedied. For instance, were mental work of any kind—even unremunerative—provided by the Government the innovation would be gladly welcomed by every exile with whom I conversed. But the authorities seem to consider apathy of the mind as essential a punishment as privation of the body. Some years ago the exiles were permitted to instruct young children of the free community, and their life was thus rendered infinitely less unbearable than before. But shortly afterwards, for no apparent reason, an order was issued from St. Petersburg prohibiting this so-called "privilege."

Oddly enough, I found an almost total lack of resentment amongst the disconsolate victims consigned here by an outrageous travesty of justice. Madame Akimova (whose portrait has already been given) for instance, a plain but homely-looking person, devoted to her child, seemed engrossed with the cares of her squalid little *ménage*, to the exclusion of all mundane matters. I sometimes wondered, as I sat in her hut and watched the little woman, clad in rusty black and honestly striving to make his home less wretched for a devoted husband, whether this could really be Theisa Akimova, the famous Nihilist, whose name at one time electrified Europe. We often spoke of Paris, which she had visited, but Akimova evinced little or no interest in the political questions of the day, and I never heard her murmur a word of complaint as to her fate. Nevertheless, she is here for life. Zimmermann was another example of patient resignation, although I fancy that in his case years of exile had somewhat dulled the edge of a once powerful intellect. Strajevsky, Miskiévitch, and the others were enduring a life of intolerable suffering for so-called offences which, in any country but Russia, would not even have subjected them to a fine, and yet when they alluded to their loss of liberty the tone was never vindictive towards those who had sent them into exile.



THE LIBRARY, FOUNDED BY THE EXILES THEMSELVES—STRAJEVSKY AND YANOVITCH PLAYING CHESS
From a Photo. by Harry de Windt.

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And it is a significant fact that, although throughout my association with these people the higher officials of State in Russia were sometimes execrated, I never once heard a member of the Imperial Family spoken of with the slightest animosity or even disrespect. The reason for this is, perhaps, to be found in the following incident. Upon one occasion I expressed my surprise to an exile that His Majesty the Czar, a ruler renowned for his humanity and tolerance, should sanction the existence of such a place of exile as Sredni-Kolymsk. "The Emperor!" was the answer, with a bitter laugh; "you may be quite sure that the Emperor doesn't know what goes on, or we should not be here for a day longer."



MADAME KALESHNIKOFF AND HER CHILDREN.
From a Photo. by Harry de Windt.

Although the expedition remained here for only ten days it seemed, on the day of our departure, as though as many months had elapsed since our arrival. Each day seemed an eternity, for my visits to the huts of the exiles generally took place, for obvious reasons, after dark. During the hours of daylight there was absolutely nothing to do but to stare moodily out of window at the wintry scene, as wan and cheerless as a lunar landscape. Outdoor exercise is undesirable in a place where you cannot walk three hundred yards in any direction without floundering into a snowdrift. So during the interminable afternoons I usually found my way to the tiny log-hut known as the Library. It contained some seven or eight hundred works, on dull and dreary subjects, which, however, had been read and re-read until most of the volumes were torn and coverless. Amongst the numerous photographs of political exiles, past and present, that were nailed to the log-walls, one object daily excited my curiosity. This was a funeral wreath composed of faded wild flowers secured by a black silk ribbon and bearing the golden inscription, "Auf Wiedersehen" in German characters. While supping one evening at the house of an official I happened to mention this withered garland, and learnt that it had been laid upon the coffin of a young exile by his comrades only a few weeks previously. The sad circumstances under which the man had met his death, and the startling *dénouement* that followed the latter, form one of the darkest tragedies that have occurred of recent years in the annals of Siberian exile. I give the story word for word as it was related to me by the chief of police, the successor of the infamous Ivanoff who figures in the tale.

In the winter of 1900 there came to Sredni-Kolymsk one Serge Kaleshnikoff, who, previous to his preliminary detention at the prison of Kharkoff, had held a commission in the Russian Volunteer Fleet. For alleged complicity with a revolutionary society known as the "Will of the People,"* Kaleshnikoff was sentenced to imprisonment for twelve months in a European fortress and subsequent banishment for eight years to Siberia.

Kaleshnikoff was a young man of about thirty years of age, whose cheerful, sympathetic nature and attractive manners soon rendered him a universal favourite. Even the officials regarded him more as a friend than a prisoner—with one exception. This was Ivanoff, the late chief of police, whose marked aversion to the young sailor was noticeable from the first day the latter set foot in the settlement. But as Ivanoff was an ignorant and surly boor, disliked even by his colleagues, Kaleshnikoff put up with his petty persecutions with equanimity.

One day last summer, while fishing from a canoe in the Kolyma, Kaleshnikoff espied the barge of Ivanoff returning from Nijni-Kolymsk, a small settlement about three hundred miles down the river. The exile, who was expecting a letter from a fellow-"political" domiciled at the latter place, paddled out into mid-stream and boarded

* Russian: "Narodna-Volya."

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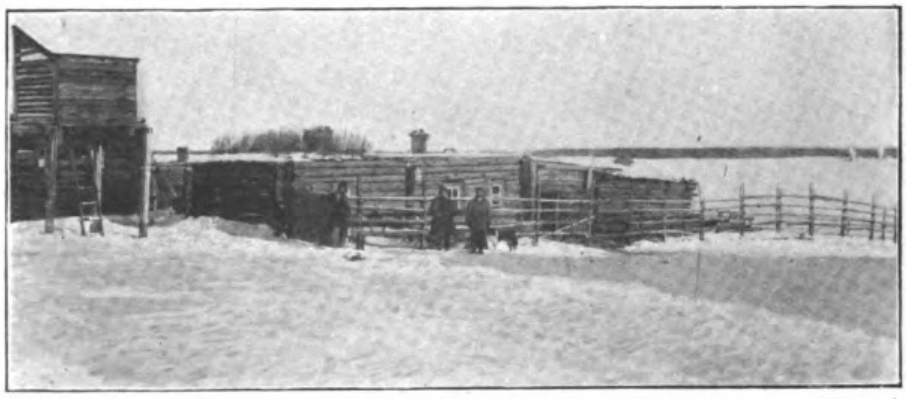
the barge, leaving his canoe to trail astern. Ivanoff, who met him at the gangway, had been drinking heavily, as was his wont. His only answer to Kaleshnikoff's polite inquiry was an oath and a shameful epithet, to which the other naturally replied with some warmth. An angry discussion followed, with the result that the chief of police, now livid with rage, summoned the guard. By his orders Kaleshnikoff was then bound hand and foot, flogged with rope-ends into a state of insensibility, and flung, bruised and bleeding, into his boat. The latter was then cast adrift, and the barge proceeded on her way up river.



M. ERGIN, WHO SHOT THE CHIEF OF POLICE.
From a Photo. by Harry de Windt.

The incident occurred some miles from Sredni-Kolymsk. The next evening, as Madame Boreisha and M. Ergin (an intimate friend of Kaleshnikoff) were strolling by the riverside, they met the latter, who, weakened by exhaustion and loss of blood, had taken more than twenty-four hours to return to the settlement. Ergin, shocked by his friend's wild and blood-stained appearance, pressed him for an explanation, but Kaleshnikoff, with a vacant stare, waved him away and, with a despairing gesture, disappeared through the doorway of his hut, only a few yards distant. A few minutes later a pistol-shot was heard, and Ergin, instinctively fearing what had happened, rushed to his friend's assistance, only to find that the latter had taken his life. Beside the dead man was a sheet of paper bearing the words, hastily scrawled in pencil: "Farewell! I go to a happier land."

An inquiry followed, and Ivanoff was placed under temporary arrest. Unfortunately for the chief of police, this order did not entail confinement to the house or he might have escaped the tragic fate which, oddly enough, overtook him on the afternoon of the very day that his victim was laid to rest in a lonely grave on the banks of the Kolyma. As luck would have it the hated official was lounging outside his doorway, smoking a cigarette, as Ergin—a gun on his shoulder—strolled homewards from the marshes. The latter asserts that the act was unpremeditated, for at the time his thoughts were far away. But Ergin adds: "The sudden appearance of that evil face and the recollection of its owner's foul and inhuman cruelty suddenly inspired me with uncontrollable fury, and I raised my fowling-piece and shot the man dead, just as he had divined my purpose and had turned to rush indoors." Ergin has ere this been tried for murder at Yakutsk, but I was assured that he would be acquitted. For Ivanoff's conduct would in any case have met with severe punishment at the hands of the authorities in St. Petersburg. Physical brutality is, as regards Russian political exiles, a thing of the past, and an official who now lays a finger on any person under his charge lays himself open to instant dismissal, or even to a term of imprisonment.



From a Photo. by] THE HOUSE OF THE CHIEF OF POLICE WHO WAS SHOT BY ERGIN. *[Harry de Windt.*

Such is a plain and unvarnished account of the penal settlement of Sredni-Kolymsk, written less with the object of entertaining the

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reading public than that of drawing attention to an accursed spot which should surely, and without delay, be erased from the face of civilization. The Kaleshnikoff tragedy is only one of many that have occurred of recent years, and, although space will not admit of my giving the details of others, I can vouch for the fact that since 1898 no fewer than three cases of suicide and four of insanity have occurred here amongst a score or so of exiles. And yet every winter more miserable hovels are prepared for the reception of exiled comrades, every year Sredni-Kolymsk enfolds fresh victims in her deadly embrace. "You will tell them in England of our life," said one, his eyes dim with tears, as I entered the sled which was to bear me, through months of Arctic desolation to the Bering Straits. And the promise made that day in that lifeless, forsaken corner of the earth, "where God is high and the Czar is far away," I have now faithfully kept. For the first time for thirty years I am enabled to give an "unofficial" account of these unfortunates, and to deliver to the world their piteous appeal for deliverance. May it be that these pages have not been written in vain, that the clemency of a wise and merciful ruler may yet be extended towards the unhappy outcasts in that Siberian hell of famine, cold, and darkness, scarcely less terrible in its ghastly loneliness than those frozen realms of eternal silence which enshrine the mystery of the world.



VARTSEGG, EXILED FOR SMUGGLING RIFLES—IN HIS HAND IS HIS DINNER OF FROZEN FISH.
From a Photo. by Harry de Windt.



From a Photo by] A GROUP OF EXILES. *[Harry de Windt.*

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Breaking a Spell.

By W. W. Jacobs.

"WITCHCRAFT?" said the old man, thoughtfully, as he scratched his scanty whiskers. No, I ain't heard o' none in these parts for a long time. There used to be a little of it about when I was a boy, and there was some talk of it arter I'd growed up, but Claybury folk never took much count of it. The last bit of it I remember was about forty years ago, and that wasn't so much witchcraft as foolishness.

There was a man in this place then—Joe Barlcomb by name—who was a firm believer in it, and 'e used to do all sorts of things to save hisself from it. He was a new-comer in Claybury, and there was such a lot of it about in the parts he came from that the people thought o' nothing else hardly.

He was a man as got 'imself very much liked at fust, especially by the old ladies, owing to his being so perlite to them, that they used to 'old 'im up for an example to the other men, and say wot nice, pretty ways he 'ad. Joe Barlcomb was everything at fust, but when they got to 'ear that his perliteness was because 'e thought arf of 'em was witches, and didn't know which arf, they altered their minds.



"HE GOT 'IMSELF VERY MUCH LIKED, ESPECIALLY BY THE OLD LADIES."

In a month or two he was the laughing-stock of the place; but wot was worse to 'im than that was that he'd made enemies of all the old ladies. Some of 'em was free-spoken women, and 'e couldn't sleep for thinking of the 'arm they might do 'im.

He was terrible uneasy about it at fust, but, as nothing 'appened and he seemed to go on very prosperous-like, 'e began to forget 'is fears, when all of a sudden 'e went 'ome one day and found 'is wife in bed with a broken leg.

She was standing on a broken chair to reach something down from the dresser when it 'appened, and it was pointed out to Joe Barlcomb that it was a thing anybody might ha' done without being bewitched; but he said 'e knew better, and that they'd kept that broken chair for standing on for years and years to save the others, and nothing 'ad ever 'appened afore.

In less than a week arter that three of his young 'uns was down with the measles, and, 'is wife being laid up, he sent for 'er mother to come and nurse 'em. It's as true as I sit 'ere, but that pore old lady 'adn't been in the house two hours afore she went to bed with the yellow jaundice.

Joe Barlcomb went out of 'is mind a'most. He'd never liked 'is wife's mother, and he wouldn't 'ave had 'er in the house on'y 'e wanted her to nurse 'is wife and children, and when she came and laid up and wanted waiting on 'e couldn't dislike her enough.

He was quite certain all along that somebody was putting a spell on 'im, and when 'e went out a morning or two arterwards and found 'is best pig lying dead in a corner of the sty he gave up and, going into the 'ouse, told 'em all that they'd 'ave to die 'cause he couldn't do anything more for 'em. His wife's mother and 'is wife and the children all started crying together, and Joe Barlcomb, when 'e thought of 'is pig, he sat down and cried too.

He sat up late that night thinking it over, and, arter looking at it all ways, he made up 'is mind to go and see Mrs. Prince, an old lady that lived all alone by 'erself in a cottage near Smith's farm. He'd set 'er down for

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wot he called a white witch, which is the best kind and on'y do useful things, such as charming warts away or telling gals about their future 'usbands; and the next arternoon, arter telling 'is wife's mother that fresh air and travelling was the best cure for the yellow jaundice, he set off to see 'er.

Mrs. Prince was sitting at 'er front door nursing 'er three cats when 'e got there. She was an ugly, little old woman with piercing black eyes and a hook nose, and she 'ad a quiet, artful sort of a way with 'er that made 'er very much disliked. One thing was she was always making fun of people, and for another she seemed to be able to tell their thoughts, and that don't get anybody liked much, especially when they don't keep it to theirselves. She'd been a lady's maid all 'er young days, and it was very 'ard to be taken for a witch just because she was old.

"Fine day, ma'am," ses Joe Barlcomb.



"MRS. PRINCE WAS SITTING AT 'ER FRONT DOOR NURSING 'ER THREE CATS."

"Very fine," ses Mrs. Prince.

"Being as I was passing, I just thought I'd look in," ses Joe Barlcomb, eyeing the cats.

"Take a chair," ses Mrs. Prince, getting up and dusting one down with 'er apron.

Joe sat down. "I'm in a bit o' trouble, ma'am," he ses, "and I thought p'r'aps as you could help me out of it. My pore pig's been bewitched, and it's dead."

"Bewitched?" ses Mrs. Prince, who'd 'eard of 'is ideas. "Rubbish. Don't talk to me."

"It ain't rubbish, ma'am," ses Joe Barlcomb; "three o' my children is down with the measles, my wife's broke 'er leg, 'er mother is laid up in my little place with the yellow jaundice, and the pig's dead."

"Wot, another one?" ses Mrs. Prince.

"No; the same one," ses Joe.

"Well, 'ow am I to help you?" ses Mrs. Prince. "Do you want me to come and nurse 'em?"

"No, no," ses Joe, starting and turning pale; "unless you'd like to come and nurse my wife's mother," he ses, arter thinking a bit. "I was hoping that you'd know who'd been overlooking me and that you'd make 'em take the spell off."

Mrs. Prince got up from 'er chair and looked round for the broom she'd been sweeping with, but, not finding it, she set down agin and stared in a curious sort o' way at Joe Barlcomb.

"Oh, I see," she ses, nodding. "Fancy you guessing I was a witch."

"You can't deceive me," ses Joe; "I've 'ad too much experience; I knew it the fust time I saw you by the mole on your nose."

Mrs. Prince got up and went into her back-place, trying her 'ardest to remember wot she'd done with that broom. She couldn't find it anywhere, and at last she came back and sat staring at Joe for so long that 'e was arf frightened out of his life. And by-and-by she gave a 'orrible smile and sat rubbing the side of 'er nose with 'er finger.

"If I help you," she ses at last, "will you promise to keep it a dead secret and do exactly as I tell you? If you don't, dead pigs'll be nothing to the misfortunes that you will 'ave."

"I will," ses Joe Barlcomb, very pale.

"The spell," ses Mrs. Prince, holding up her 'ands and shutting 'er eyes, "was put upon you by a man. It is one out of six men as is jealous of you because you're so clever, but which one it is I can't tell without your assistance. Have you got any money?"

"A little," ses Joe, anxious-like—"a very little. Wot with the yellow jaundice and other things, I---."

"Fust thing to do," ses Mrs. Prince, still with her eyes shut, "you go up to the

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Cauliflower to-night; the six men'll all be there, and you must buy six ha'pennies off of them; one each."

"Buy six ha'pennies?" ses Joe, staring at her.

"Don't repeat wot I say," ses Mrs. Prince; "it's unlucky. You buy six ha'pennies for a shilling each, without saying wot it's for. You'll be able to buy 'em all right if you're civil."

"It seems to me it don't need much civility for that," ses Joe, pulling a long face.

"When you've got the ha'pennies," ses Mrs. Prince, "bring 'em to me and I'll tell you wot to do with 'em. Don't lose no time, because I can see that something worse is going to 'appen if it ain't prevented."

"Is it anything to do with my wife's mother getting worse?" ses Joe Barlcomb, who was a careful man and didn't want to waste six shillings.

"No, something to you," ses Mrs. Prince.

Joe Barlcomb went cold all over, and then he put down a couple of eggs he'd brought round for 'er and went off 'ome agin, and Mrs. Prince stood in the doorway with a cat on each shoulder and watched 'im till 'e was out of sight.

That night Joe Barlcomb came up to this 'ere Cauliflower public-house, same as he'd been told, and by-and-by, arter he 'ad 'ad a pint, he looked round, and taking a shilling out of 'is pocket put it on the table, and he ses, "Who'll give me a ha'penny for that?" he ses.

None of 'em seemed to be in a hurry. Bill Jones took it up and bit it, and rang it on the table and squinted at it, and then he bit it agin, and turned round and asked Joe Barlcomb wot was wrong with it.

"Wrong?" ses Joe; "nothing."

Bill Jones put it down agin. "You're wide awake, Joe," he ses, "but so am I."

"Won't nobody give me a ha'penny for it?" ses Joe, looking round.

Then Peter Lamb came up, and he looked at it and rang it, and at last he gave Joe a ha'penny for it and took it round, and everybody 'ad a look at it.

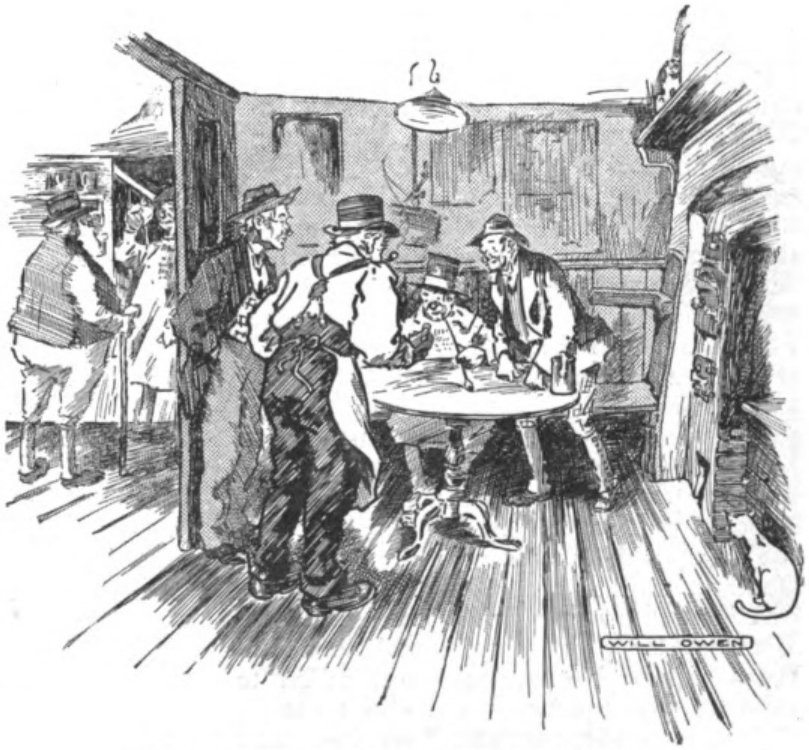
"It stands to reason it's a bad 'un," ses Bill Jones, "but it's so well done I wish as I'd bought it."

"H-s-h!" ses Peter Lamb; "don't let the landlord 'ear you."

The landlord 'ad just that moment come in, and Peter walked up and ordered a pint, and took his tenpence change as bold as brass. Arter that Joe Barlcomb bought five more ha'pennies afore you could wink a'most, and every man wot sold one went up to the bar and 'ad a pint and got tenpence change, and drank Joe Barlcomb's health.

"There seems to be a lot o' money knocking about to-night," ses the landlord, as Sam Martin, the last of 'em, was drinking 'is pint.

Sam Martin choked and put 'is pot down on the counter with a bang, and him and the other five was out o' that door and sailing up the road with their tenpences afore the landlord could get his breath. He stood in the bar scatching his 'ead and staring, but he couldn't understand it a bit till a man wot was too late to sell his ha'penny up and told 'im all about it. The fuss 'e made was terrible. The shillings was in a little heap on a shelf at the back o' the bar, and he did all sorts o' things to 'em to prove that they was bad, and threatened Joe Barlcomb with the police. At last, however, 'e saw wot a fool he was making of himself, and arter nearly breaking his teeth 'e dropped them into a drawer and stirred 'em up with the others.



"HE TOOK IT ROUND AND EVERYBODY 'AD A LOOK AT IT."

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Joe Barlcomb went round the next night to see Mrs. Prince, and she asked 'im a lot o' questions about the men as 'ad sold 'im the ha'pennies.

"The fust part 'as been done very well," she ses, nodding her 'ead at 'im; "if you do the second part as well, you'll soon know who your enemy is."

"Nothing'll bring the pig back," ses Joe.

"There's worse misfortunes than that, as I've told you," ses Mrs. Prince, sharply. "Now, listen to wot I'm going to say to you. When the clock strikes twelve to-night——"

"Our clock don't strike," ses Joe.

"Then you must borrow one that does," ses Mrs. Prince, "and when it strikes twelve you must go round to each o' them six men and sell them a ha'penny for a shilling."

Joe Barlcomb looked at 'er. "'Ow?" he ses, short-like.

"Same way as you sold 'em a shilling for a ha'penny," ses Mrs. Prince; "it don't matter whether they buy the ha'pennies or not. All you've got to do is to go and ask 'em, and the man as makes the most fuss is the man that 'as put the trouble on you."

"It seems a roundabout way o' going to work," ses Joe.

"*Wot!*" screams Mrs. Prince, jumping up and waving her arms about. "*Wot!* Go your own way; I'll have nothing more to do with you. And don't blame me for anything that happens. It's a very bad thing to come to a witch for advice and then not to do as she tells you. You ought to know that."

"I'll do it, ma'am," ses Joe Barlcomb, trembling.

"You'd better," ses Mrs. Prince; "and mind—not a word to anybody."

Joe promised her agin, and 'e went off and borrered a clock from Albert Price, and at twelve o'clock that night he jumped up out of bed and began to dress 'imself and pretend not to 'ear his wife when she asked 'im where he was going.

It was a dark, nasty sort o' night, blowing and raining, and, o' course, everybody 'ad gone to bed long since. The fust cottage Joe came to was Bill Jones's, and, knowing Bill's temper, he stood for some time afore he could make up 'is mind to knock; but at last he up with 'is stick and banged away at the door.

A minute arterwards he 'eard the bedroom winder pushed open, and then Bill Jones popped his 'ead out and called to know wot was the matter and who it was.

"It's me—Joe Barlcomb," ses Joe, "and I want to speak to you very partikler."

"Well, speak away," ses Bill. "You go into the back room," he ses, turning to his wife.

"Whaffor?" ses Mrs. Jones.

"'Cos I don't know wot Joe is going to say," ses Bill. "You go in now, afore I make you."

His wife went off grumbling, and then Bill told Joe Barlcomb to hurry up wot he'd got to say as 'e 'adn't got much on and the weather wasn't as warm as it might be.

"I sold you a shilling for a ha'penny last night, Bill," ses Joe.

"Do you want to sell any more?" ses Bill Jones, putting his 'and down to where 'is trouser pocket ought to be.

"Not exactly that," ses Joe Barlcomb. "This time I want you to sell me a shilling for a ha'penny."

Bill leaned out of the winder and stared down at Joe Barlcomb, and then he ses, in a choking voice, "Is that wot you've come disturbing my sleep for at this time o' night?" he ses.

"I must 'ave it, Bill," ses Joe.

"Well, if you'll wait a moment," ses Bill, trying to speak perlitely, "I'll come down and give it to you."

Joe didn't like 'is tone of voice, but he waited, and all of a sudden Bill Jones came out o' that door like a gun going off and threw 'imself on Joe Barlcomb. Both of 'em was strong men, and by the time they'd finished they was so tired they could 'ardly stand. Then Bill Jones went back to bed, and Joe Barlcomb, arter sitting down on the doorstep to rest 'imself, went off and knocked up Peter Lamb.

Peter Lamb was a little man and no good as a fighter, but the things he said to Joe Barlcomb as he leaned out o' the winder and shook 'is fist at him was 'arder to bear than blows. He screamed away at the top of 'is voice for ten minutes, and then 'e pulled the winder to with a bang and went back to bed.

Joe Barlcomb was very tired, but he walked on to Jasper Potts's 'ouse, trying 'ard as he walked to decide which o' the fust two 'ad made the most fuss. Arter he 'ad left Jasper Potts 'e got more puzzled than ever, Jasper being just as bad as the other two, and Joe leaving 'im at last in the middle of loading 'is gun.

By the time he'd made 'is last call—at Sam Martin's—it was past three o'clock, and he could no more tell Mrs. Prince which 'ad made the most fuss than 'e could fly. There didn't seem to be a pin to choose between

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'em, and, arf worried out of 'is life, he went straight on to Mrs. Prince and knocked 'er up to tell 'er. She thought the 'ouse was afire at fust, and came screaming out o' the front door in 'er bedgown, and when she found out who it was she was worse to deal with than the men 'ad been.

She 'ad quieted down by the time Joe went round to see 'er the next evening, and asked 'im to describe exactly wot the six men 'ad done and said. She sat listening quite quiet at fust, but arter a time she scared Joe



"SHE SAT LISTENING QUITE QUIET AT FUST."

by making a odd, croupy sort o' noise in 'er throat, and at last she got up and walked into the back-place. She was there a long time making funny noises, and at last Joe walked towards the door on tiptoe and peeped through the crack and saw 'er in a sort o' fit, sitting in a chair with 'er arms folded acrost her bodice and rocking 'erself up and down and moaning. Joe stood as if 'e'd been frozen a'most, and then 'e crept back to 'is seat and waited, and when she came into the room agin she said as the trouble 'ad all been caused by Bill Jones. She sat still for nearly arf an hour, thinking 'ard, and then she turned to Joe and ses:—

"Can you read?" she ses.

"No," ses Joe, wondering wot was coming next.

"That's all right, then," she ses, "because if you could I couldn't do wot I'm going to do."

"That shows the 'arm of eddication," ses Joe. "I never did believe in it."

Mrs. Prince nodded, and then she went and got a bottle with something in it which looked to Joe like gin, and arter getting out 'er pen and ink and printing some words on a piece o' paper she stuck it on the bottle, and sat looking at Joe and thinking.

"Take this up to the Cauliflower," she ses, "make friends with Bill Jones, and give him as much beer as he'll drink, and give 'im a little o' this gin in each mug. If he drinks it the spell will be broken, and you'll be luckier than you 'ave ever been in your life afore. When 'e's drunk some, and not before, leave the bottle standing on the table."

Joe Barlcomb thanked 'er, and with the bottle in 'is pocket went off to the Cauliflower, whistling. Bill Jones was there, and Peter Lamb, and two or three more of 'em, and at fust they said some pretty 'ard things to him about being woke up in the night.

"Don't bear malice, Bill," ses Joe Barlcomb; "'ave a pint with me."

He ordered two pints, and then sat down alongside o' Bill, and in five minutes they was like brothers.

"'Ave a drop o' gin in it, Bill," he ses, taking the bottle out of 'is pocket.

Bill thanked 'im and had a drop, and then, thoughtful-like, he wanted Joe to 'ave some in his too, but Joe said no, he'd got a touch o' toothache, and it was bad for it.

"I don't mind 'aving a drop in my beer, Joe," ses Peter Lamb.

"Not to-night, mate," ses Joe; "it's all for Bill. I bought it on purpose for 'im."

Bill shook 'ands with him, and when Joe called for another pint and put some more gin in it he said that 'e was the noblest-'arted man that ever lived.

"You wasn't saying so arf an hour ago," ses Peter Lamb.

"'Cos I didn't know 'im so well then," ses Bill Jones.

"You soon change your mind, don't you?" ses Peter.

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Bill didn't answer 'im. He was leaning back on the bench and staring at the bottle as if 'e couldn't believe his eyesight. His face was all white and shining, and 'is hair as wet as if it 'ad just been dipped in a bucket o' water.

"See a ghost, Bill?" ses Peter, looking at 'im.

Bill made a 'orrible noise in his throat, and kept on staring at the bottle till they thought 'e'd gone crazy. Then Jasper Potts bent his 'ead down and began to read out loud wot was on the bottle. "P-O-I—POISON FOR BILL JONES," he ses, in a voice as if 'e couldn't believe it.

You might 'ave heard a pin drop. Everybody turned and looked at Bill Jones, as he sat there trembling all over. Then those that could read took up the bottle and read it out loud all over agin.

"Pore Bill," ses Peter Lamb. "I 'ad a feeling come over me that something was wrong."

"You're a murderer," ses Sam Martin, catching 'old of Joe Barlcomb. "You'll be 'ung for this. Look at pore Bill, cut off in 'is prime."

"Run for the doctor," ses someone.

Two of 'em ran off as 'ard as they could go, and then the landlord came round the bar and asked Bill to go and die outside, because 'e didn't want to be brought into it. Jasper Potts told 'im to clear off, and then he bent down and asked Bill where the pain was.

"I don't think he'll 'ave much pain," ses Peter Lamb, who always pretended to know a lot more than other people. "It'll soon be over, Bill."

"We've all got to go some day," ses Sam Martin.

"Better to die young than live to be a trouble to yourself," ses Bob Harris.

To 'ear them talk everybody seemed to think that Bill Jones was in luck; everybody but Bill Jones 'imself, that is.

"I ain't fit to die," he ses, shivering. "You don't know 'ow bad I've been."

"Wot 'ave you done, Bill?" ses Peter Lamb, in a soft voice. "If it'll ease your feelings afore you go to make a clean breast of it, we're all friends here."

Bill groaned.

"And it's too late for you to be punished for anything," ses Peter, arter a moment.

Bill Jones groaned agin, and then, shaking 'is 'ead, began to w'isper 'is wrong-doings. When the doctor came in arf an hour arterwards all the men was as quiet as mice, and pore Bill was still w'ispering as 'ard as he could w'isper.

The doctor pushed 'em out of the way in a moment, and then 'e bent over Bill and felt 'is pulse and looked at 'is tongue. Then he listened to his 'art, and in a puzzled way smelt at the bottle, which Jasper Potts was a-minding of, and wetted 'is finger and tasted it.

"Somebody's been making a fool of you and me too," he ses, in a angry voice. "It's only gin, and very good gin at that. Get up and go home."

It all came out next morning, and Joe Barlcomb was the laughing-stock of the place. Most people said that Mrs. Prince 'ad done quite right, and they 'oped that it ud be a lesson to him, but nobody ever talked much of witchcraft in Claybury agin. One thing was that Bill Jones wouldn't 'ave the word used in 'is hearing.



"THE DOCTOR FELT 'IS PULSE AND LOOKED AT 'IS TONGUE."

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From Behind the Speaker's Chair.

LXXIX.

(VIEWED BY HENRY W. LUCY.)

UNIQUE.

LORD JAMES OF HEREFORD holds a position unique among English public men. As everyone knows, at the time when the Liberal Party was riven by Mr. Gladstone's nailing its flag to the Home Rule mast Sir Henry James (as he then ranked) was tempted to stand by his old chief by offer of the Lord Chancellorship. For conscience' sake he, to his honour, declined a prize dear to the heart of the barrister who has made his mark in politics. It is less widely known that at an earlier date the certainly not less lofty position of Speaker of the House of Commons was within his grasp. On the retirement of Sir Henry Brand, Mr. Gladstone, on the look-out for a worthy successor, approached his Attorney-General with offer of the Speakership. Having carefully considered the position and his own prospects, Sir Henry James begged to be excused.



THE VISION OF THE WOOLSACK.

It was a stock criticism of Mr. Gladstone that, whilst an admirable judge and complete master of people *en masse*, he failed justly to estimate the possibilities of individual men. This incident certainly gives the lie to carping criticism. Sir Henry James would have made a model Speaker. Pre-eminently a man of judicial mind, long trained in courts of law, he has the ready wit, the facile yet precise gift of speech, and, not least, the fine presence which are essential to perfect success in the Chair.

DARK HORSES.

It was at this epoch that the Speakership was also offered to Mr. Goschen. In what order of precedence they were approached it would be rude to inquire. Mr. Goschen would have accepted the post, but felt unequal to its duties on account of defective eyesight. Thus it came to pass that Mr. Gladstone discovered Mr. Arthur Peel, who proved one of the greatest Speakers of modern time. It is a curious coincidence that both the present Speaker and his predecessor happened at the time of their selection for the highest position in the House to be personally unknown, even by appearance, to the majority of their fellow-members. Mr. Peel at the time of his election had been a member for nineteen years. He had even held minor offices. He was most prominent as Liberal Whip in the last Session of the great Parliament that disestablished the Irish Church and attempted to free Irish land. Ten years elapsed before he was named for the Speakership, and in that period the *personnel* of the House of Commons changes in astonishing degree. Members who knew not Arthur sat on the benches and marvelled that a comparatively obscure man, albeit endowed with a great Parliamentary name, should be nominated for Speaker.

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This ignorance of his personality made the more striking the disclosure of the real man which flashed upon the crowded House when the new Speaker, standing on the steps of the Chair, delivered his memorable speech, in which he expressed the determination to carry on its traditions unimpaired.

"NOT KNOWN."

Mr. Gully had been only nine years a member of the House when he was elected Speaker. A hard-working member of the Northern Circuit, his ambition limited by modest expectancy of a judgeship, he took little part in the debates or ordinary business of the House. It is a fact, as was reported at the time, that Mr. Balfour, meeting Mr. Chamberlain at dinner, asked him what he thought of the Liberal nominee for the Speakership. "I never to my knowledge saw him," said Mr. Chamberlain. "Nor did I," responded Mr. Balfour. "I should not know him if he entered this room unannounced."

In a very short time both right hon. gentlemen came to know him very well, recognising in him a great Speaker.

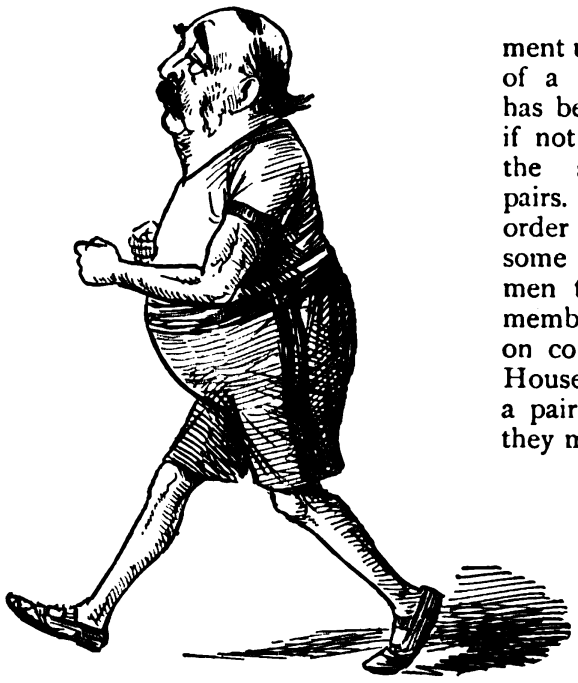
A TRUE FRIEND.

There was a period when, quite apart from the running of Sir Matthew White Ridley, Mr. Gully's selection hung in the balance. Of all men in the Liberal camp Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman looked longingly at the vacant Chair. By temperament, by ability, by long Parliamentary practice, and by high standing in the House he was peculiarly well qualified for the post. The marvel was that he should think of submitting to its honourable but exhausting drudgery. Wonderment being expressed in his presence, Sir Henry admitted that, beyond the supreme honour of election, what attracted him to the post was the fact that the Speaker is excused from the duty enforced upon prominent members of either party of breaking in on the sanctity of the recess by making speeches to their own constituency and those of other members.

Happily for Sir Henry, the esteem and self-devotion of a colleague in the Cabinet spared him what would have been a personal sacrifice second only to that involved in leading a section of the Opposition in the House of Commons. On high constitutional principles the colleague took exception to a Cabinet Minister walking from the Treasury Bench into the Chair. So strong was his view on the subject that he threatened to resign if the proposal—which, of course, had not emanated from Sir Henry—were insisted upon. C.-B. met the growing difficulty by declining nomination, and the distracted Cabinet stumbled on Mr. Gully.

Thus, with the Cabinet as with lesser folk,

> There's a Divinity that shapes our ends,
> Rough-hew them how we will.



IN THE RUN FOR THE SPEAKERSHIP.

PAIRING.

One important result of the establishment under the new rules of a fixed dinner-hour has been greatly to ease, if not altogether remove, the strain for dinner pairs. Under the old order of things, with some estimable gentlemen the first duty of a member of Parliament on coming down to the House was to look for a pair. Questions over, they made their way into the Lobby and began the anxious hunt. The old stagers familiar at this game were naturally Ministerialists. Their normal condition of being in a vast majority is in this respect increased by the fact that the Irish Nationalist members are forbidden to pair. The hunt was consequently limited to Liberal members who, as the dinner-hour approached, found themselves objects of endearing regard by members opposite who wanted to get away for dinner and dare not pass the Whips on guard at the door unless they had paired.

Some years ago, a compassionate observer of this daily quandary, I threw out in these

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pages a practical suggestion. Why should not members on either side in search of a dinner pair wear a bit of coloured ribbon in their buttonhole indicating their desire? If that were too simple a device for adoption by legislators, it would be easy to keep in an accessible place in the Library or Tea Room a book in which might be written the names of members on either side desiring a dinner pair. Under either system an arrangement would be quickly made, members being spared the wearisome search.

The idea was very popular in the House, but no one took on himself to arrange for putting it in practice. Nothing came of it, and the dreary afternoon's hunt by haggard-eyed members went on as before.

A REAL DANGER.

A fresh danger has developed under the new rule. But it chiefly affects His Majesty's Ministers. The sitting being suspended at 7.30, members are free to go off to dinner on the understanding that they will again be in their places at nine o'clock, when business recommences. For an ordinary dinner at a club, or a quiet meal at home within reasonable distance of Westminster, an hour and a half should serve. In the case of joining a dinner-party, it is cutting it a little fine to leave the House at 7.30, go home and dress, get to your destination, and be back on the stroke of nine.

Failure to observe the understanding is, however, a serious matter for the Ministry. The greater number of the Irish Nationalists do not leave the precincts of the House during the dinner-hour. Many others on the Opposition side find the place more comfortable than any alternative offered to them, and also remain. On more than one occasion during the earlier part of the Session Ministers had some exceedingly anxious moments as the fingers of the clock slowly moved beyond the figure IX. It several times happened that for fifteen or twenty minutes the strongest Ministry of modern times was actually at the mercy of the Opposition. The latter, borrowing the tactics of Brer Rabbit, had only to "lay low, say nuffin," and rush a division. On one occasion, on a really important issue, they ran the Government majority down to twenty-nine.

DOUBLE SHIFTS.

It was after this that the Whips devised a system which, if it would only work, would keep the fort safely garrisoned. The Ministerial forces were divided into two wings, one moiety pledged to be in their places at nine o'clock sharp on Monday and Wednesday nights, the other mustering on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Excellent in theory, this did not equal expectation in practice. Members of the House of Commons are, after all, only human. In the human breast there is ineradicable tendency to believe that someone else, equally pledged in such circumstances, is sure to be punctual, and if you are unavoidably a little late no danger to the Empire will accrue.

The working of this sanguine view of other people's reliability was shown with increasing force as the Session lengthened. With a majority which, even after Leeds, exceeds 130 the Ministry should be safe between 9 and 9.30 p.m. Experience shows that they are not, and some night there will be grievous calamity.

If these things are done in the green tree, what shall be done in the dry? If a majority of 130 cannot be depended upon to hold the fort between 9 and 10 p.m., what would happen in the case of a majority of forty—all Mr. Gladstone had at his command ten years ago, when he carried the Home Rule Bill?

SOCIETY'S DINNER-HOUR.

The only hope of salvation for His Majesty's Ministers is alteration of the dinner-hour through the London season. Of late years it has steadily advanced. Most of us can remember a time when invitations were issued for 7.45, with the understanding that the guests would be seated at table on the stroke of eight. Perhaps, in the majority of cases, eight o'clock is the hour now named, with the understanding that no one shall be later than 8.15. But the fashion of inviting guests to dinner at 8.15, dinner being served a quarter of an hour later, is growing. In such circumstances it is obviously impossible for members of the House of Commons dining out to be on guard at Westminster at nine o'clock.

Compared with the federation of the Empire or a penny off or on the income-tax this may seem a trivial matter. In the Whips' Room it is recognised that upon it may depend the fate of the Ministry. In the dinner-hour of Friday, 21st of June, 1895, Lord Rosebery's Government was defeated in the House of Commons by a majority of seven. The occasion was apparently trivial, an attack on the administration of the War Office affecting the supply of cordite. Had the Ministerialists foreseen the gravity of the issue they would have remained at their posts and repelled the guerilla attack. They

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thought little about it, went off to dinner, and came back to learn that the Ministry had been defeated. On the following Monday Sir William Harcourt announced the resignation of the Government, a step that made way for Lord Salisbury's third Administration.

What stupendous phases of history followed thereupon, succeeding each other through seven memorable years, we know. But few of us reflect on the circumstance that the possibility was created by a snatch division taken in the dinner-hour in a half-empty House.



THE CORDITE CONSPIRACY—MR. BRODRICK APPLIES THE TORCH.

AT CROSS PURPOSES.

I hear from one of the house-party a pretty story of an adventure that some years ago befell one of our hereditary legislators. It happened before he came into the peerage. He was staying at a country house honoured by the presence of the Prince and Princess of Wales, now our gracious Sovereigns. Her Royal Highness having retired for the night, the gentlemen of the party sat down to cards. In the course of a game at whist one gentleman, whom we will call A., revoked, an incident made the subject of much good-humoured remonstrance.

The heir to a peerage, whom we will call B., in due time went off to bed. Opening what he believed was his bedroom door, he, to his horror, discovered that he had happed on that belonging to the Princess of Wales. He was so upset by the accident that, making some excuse, he left the house after an early breakfast and fled back to town.

The Princess of Wales came down to luncheon on the day following the awkward incident and found herself seated by A. He was the object of renewed chaff about his revoking, veiled allusions to the slip being made. Her Royal Highness, not having heard of the incident at the card-table and not quite catching the drift of the conversation, turned to A. and, with an amused smile, said: "So it was *you* who made the little mistake last night?"

A., who had not heard of the bedroom incident and was full of his own misadventure, bowed his head and blushingly said: "Yes; but I assure your Royal Highness it's not a thing I'm accustomed to do."

It was not till he met B. in London a week later that he realized the scope of his confession.

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THE NINE-FIFTEEN

By Florence Warden.

Author of "The House on the Marsh," "A Thief in the Night," etc.

IT was Christmas-time, and the nine-fifteen train from St. Pancras to Edinburgh was fairly well filled when I took my seat in a third-class compartment, and thought myself lucky in getting a corner.

The weather was bitterly cold, and the prospect of an all-night journey not a particularly pleasant one. Snow had been falling all day in London, and, although a good deal of it had melted as it fell, there was reason to fear that the state of affairs would be worse farther north, and that the journey might be longer and more tedious than usual.

These fears were reflected on the faces of my fellow-passengers in the compartment, of whom there were five.

In one of the far corners sat a shrewd-looking, sandy-haired young man, whose accent and appearance proclaimed him to be a Scotchman, of an unsympathetic type. I took a strong dislike to him from the moment of my first observing the manner in which he settled himself in his corner, and the satisfied smirk on his face when another passenger got in and looked disappointed on seeing that all the corners were occupied already.

Not that I myself felt very warmly towards this new-comer, who was a showily-dressed, florid woman of about forty, with hair which looked as if art had assisted Nature in the production of a beautiful copper-coloured tint, and a grand manner of looking round upon her fellow-passengers as if they were so many worms, upon whom she had a right to tread if she chose. A slender, mild-looking girl was seeing her off, and handing her the various encumbrances of dressing-bag, and rug, and millinery-box, and large and small parcels, with which the imposing lady proceeded to surround and wall herself in.

The corner opposite to the young Scotchman was filled by a tall, thin man, dressed in black clothes, and wearing a soft, wide-brimmed black hat and gold spectacles, which helped to give him an aspect, not only of respectability, but of benignity and saintliness. He was munching biscuits in a furtive and severely respectable manner, having evidently come away on his journey without having had time to dine.

The man next to me was a stout, well-dressed man, who looked like a prosperous stockbroker, and, if one ever dared wonder why strangers did things not expected of them, one would have wondered why he, with his sleek and prosperous appearance, his smart luggage and his general air of being used to the best share of the best things, should be travelling in a modest third-class carriage, instead of in a more luxurious "first." I was very glad to have him nearest to me, for, with all his lordly grumblings at the porter and sneers at British railway travelling, I felt that the man was by nature good-humoured, and preferred his neighbourhood to that of the canny Scot or the prim-looking elderly gentleman who sat opposite to him.

Now, I have left to the last the description of the person who sat in the opposite seat to mine, although from the first moment I caught sight of her I felt in her an interest overwhelmingly greater than that inspired by any of the rest. Of course, I hold the only sane opinion about love at first sight, and I know, therefore, that it is for the most part a fallacy, an illusion of the eye, and not in the least a guarantee that the individual who inspires it is calculated to realize the dreams of which her too willing victim has made her the unconscious heroine.

Nevertheless, I suppose that most men have been, at one time or another, the victims of some such seizure as that which attacked me within the first few minutes of finding myself face to face with the girl in the corner-seat.

For a long time I could not even see her face properly, but the more I saw, the more I involuntarily admired, the more I felt that there was a glamour of witchery about this woman which I had never seen in any other.

She was very young, of that I felt sure long before I had discerned more of her face than was to be made out through the folds of one of those curious silky gauze veils which leave the features they cover sometimes a vague, unrecognisable mass, while at any moment a movement may reveal each feature in delicate distinctness.

She was dressed in dark clothes of con-

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ventional shape and cut, not at all calculated to enhance the power of her charms; yet charming she was in spite of all disadvantages of thick black cloth jacket, plain dark stuff skirt, and insignificant small black hat.

There was something more than usually graceful, too, about her movements, as I saw when she rose to get one of her parcels down from the rack above; while her voice, as she apologized for touching the shoulder of the imposing lady beside her, was refined, sweet, and winning. About her whole person and manner there were a modesty and a timidity very uncommon in women as pretty as she was; so that, as I was only five-and-twenty, and as I had been out in West Africa for some months, fighting in one of our unconsidered and trifling minor wars, there are perhaps excuses to be made for the strong impression the beautiful stranger made upon me.

We were all in our seats some minutes before the starting of the train, and it was while we were quietly shuffling down into



"WE WERE ALL IN OUR SEATS SOME MINUTES BEFORE THE STARTING OF THE TRAIN.'

our places, undoing rugs and making ourselves as comfortable as we could in view of the long, cold journey in front of us, that the Scotchman, who had been looking out of the window, pointed out to the prim man opposite a person who was walking slowly up and down the platform, looking into the different compartments as he went.

"That man's a detective," said the Scotchman, in a voice just loud enough to reach the ears of all the rest of us.

The prosperous-looking City man beside me drew himself up and craned his neck hastily to see. The prim man in the corner left off munching his biscuit.

"How do you know?" he asked, in exactly the dry tones his appearance had prepared one for.

The Scotchman smiled and slightly shook his head.

"There's something about the man that's enough to 'give him away,'" he answered. "Just observe the way he's pulled down his travelling cap over his eyes, and the sharp way in which he peers out under it. But if that's not enough, then look at his feet. Those policeman's boots are an autobiography."

"H'm," assented the prim man, and he sat farther back and finished his biscuit thoughtfully.

In the meantime everybody else in the carriage had shown more or less interest in the little incident. My pretty companion had appeared quite startled by it, as one might have expected such a sensitive and shy little creature to be at this mere reminder of the fact of the existence of criminals and crime. The showily-dressed lady by her side seemed to be quite disturbed by the circumstance, and watched the man on the platform with a certain nervousness which seemed altogether unaccountable. As for me, I looked from one to the other of my companions, hoping for an adventure, and wondering whether any

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one of these apparently law-abiding citizens would prove to be the person of whom the detective appeared to be in search.

As for this man himself, I thought the Scotchman's conjecture a shrewd one. For although I was too lame from a recent wound in the right foot to care to get up and cross the carriage to look for the tell-tale boots, I could see enough of the man in question, and of the piercing glance of his eyes from under his peaked cap, to feel pretty sure that he was not only a detective by profession, but that he was on special duty.

It was curious to see how this impression gained ground among us all, and with how much interest, if not indeed anxiety, we all watched, more or less furtively, for the man's passing and repassing. My pretty girl drew farther into her corner, but I could see the gleam of her blue eyes behind her veil as she turned her face towards the farther window. The City man and the smartly-dressed lady affected to take no interest in the man's movements, but it was clear that this was only a pretence, and they both looked out for his coming as keenly as the rest of us. Both the prim man and the young Scotchman made no secret of their interest.

But when the man in the peaked cap began to pass the window of our compartment more and more frequently, and when it became increasingly evident that he never did so without passing the whole of us in swift but careful review, then it was strange to note what a restlessness grew upon most of us, and how some turned away as if by accident, while others offered a sort of defiant front to the man's gaze.

I believe I was the only person of the six who maintained any sort of composure under this new and closer scrutiny, and I confess I was much amused by the sort of veiled consternation I could read in two out of the five other faces. My City friend became apoplectic; the middle-aged lady with the copper-coloured hair began to suffer from a sort of nervous rage which set me wondering what the state of her conscience might be; while the pretty, fair-haired girl opposite shrank into herself, and looked as if she would like to hide under the seat.

Yet she at least could have nothing on her mind to make her fear the scrutiny of an inquiry agent, whether from Scotland Yard or elsewhere!

A sense of relief and satisfaction became clearly evident to me throughout the compartment when at last the train began to move, and the spirits of my next neighbour, the City man, improved at once.

Whether a common sense of trouble escaped made a bond of sympathy between us I do not know, but we soon became more communicative and friendly than a party of British strangers usually becomes at such short notice. So that before we reached Bedford—the first stopping-place out of London—I had heard enough talk from all my fellow-travellers, with one exception, to give me a little insight into their character and habits.

But the one exception was an important one: it was the pretty girl. The more friendly the rest became, the more she seemed to shrink into herself and to avoid intercourse with the rest of us. While this behaviour made her more interesting, it irritated, piqued me. I should so much have liked to hear that gentle voice again—a voice which had struck me as the sweetest I had ever heard. But then I was in love, in a sort of way, and my opinion must be taken with reserve.

Conversation was in full swing when the train stopped for the first time; but a sudden deadly pause ensued when the face of the detective was once more seen at the window. There was no mistaking the fact that this incident had an intense interest and significance for some of us.

He passed, and for a moment the talk flowed on, intermittently. Then the door of the compartment was thrown open from the outside, and the man in the peaked cap, standing on the platform with his bag in his hand and his rug over his arm, asked if there was room for one.

Nobody answered. Why, indeed, should anybody answer any more than ask such a question? For it was patent that there was room for more than one, and we all knew instinctively that the man had a motive for wishing to hear somebody's voice.

Whose?

There was a moment's dead silence, and then, without waiting further, the man got in, put his bag, with an apology, in the rack facing my side, and sat down between the young Scotchman and the prosperous City man.

The smartly-dressed lady had become as quiet as a mouse; the pretty girl turned her face away; the prim man looked straight in front of him; the City man whistled softly to himself; the Scotchman watched the newcomer narrowly.

The last-named, however, had scarcely seated himself when he got up again, gave one glance at his bag, put his rug to keep

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his seat, and got out of the carriage, making for the refreshment-room.

I had a presentiment that someone would seize the opportunity of his momentary absence to escape from the compartment, and with this conviction strongly in my mind I sat back in my corner, half closed my eyes, and waited. It was with a spasm of horror that I found my hypothesis correct. Someone did take the opportunity to escape: it was the pretty girl. Scarcely had the detective disappeared than she sprang up, got down her light luggage from the rack, and hurried out of the carriage. I confess to a feeling of the utmost consternation. For there was, I felt sure, something more than a mere woman's reluctance to be present at any sort of "scene" in her mind; her manner was not only hurried, but furtive. And even as she stepped out on the platform I saw the gleam of her blue eyes under her veil watching the door of the refreshment-room while she turned to look for another carriage.

I had not yet got over my surprise and consternation when this first disappearance was followed by another, and then another. My eyes grew round with astonishment as my fellow-passengers, gathering up their light luggage, popped out of the compartment, one after the other, like rabbits disturbed by the sound of a gun. Out into the darkness they all went, disappearing this way and that; so that by the time our friend the detective re-entered the compartment I was its only other occupant.

I thought I heard him chuckle to himself as he got in at the last moment before the train restarted, and settled himself in the corner which had been vacated by the prim man in the wide-brimmed hat and the gold spectacles. Then he pushed up his peaked cap a little, and I saw a shrewd pair of eyes under thick black eyebrows, a commonplace nose, and a heavy black moustache. He caught my eye and nodded.

"Afraid I've frightened the rest of our friends away," he said, somewhat sardonically. "Looks as if there were some uneasy consciences about, don't it, sir?"

But I was too discreet to admit that I guessed what his profession was; so I said, politely:—

"Indeed! I don't see what there is in your appearance alarming enough for that."

But he smiled and shook his head gently.

"Oh, you won't hurt my feelings by owning you've guessed my business," he said; and thrusting out one of the tell-tale boots, which had, indeed, helped to betray him, he added: "These boots give us all away. I'm sure I don't know why the authorities haven't tumbled to that and set us up before this in patent leather."

I laughed in my turn.

"Well, I think myself you can be detected as quickly by the eyes as by the boots," I said; "and you couldn't get rid of those, could you?"

The detective looked rather amused.

"By Jove, I hadn't thought of that," said he. "But I suppose we do get into a sharp way of looking about us, which, as you say, is another trade-mark. At any rate, it has served me well on this occasion, for it has cleared the decks a bit."

And he glanced round the compartment, which was now empty but for himself and me.

"Cleared the decks?" echoed I, wondering.

"Yes. There's nothing to be gained by denying that I'm on business, and that, as my work lies very near to my hand, I prefer to do it without too much of a crowd at my elbow."

"You're after someone who is in the train?" hazarded I, with interest.

The detective nodded.

"That's it, sir. A well-known jewel thief, who's got away with something like ten thousand pounds' worth, unless they've made a mistake."

"What!" cried I, uneasy, remembering who it was that had left the carriage first. "And you think it was one of the passengers in here——"

But he relieved my mind by a shake of the head.

"Oh, no. He's in the next compartment to this, I believe. But I haven't been able to make quite sure yet, because I don't want to frighten him."

I was puzzled.

"Then why——" I began, and then I stopped.

He took up my words where I had left off. "Why did all the people in here get out in such a hurry? Why, for the same reason that nineteen out of every twenty people will keep out of the way of one of us if they can. Ten to one, sir, they've all got their little secrets and their little worries, and feel easier out of my company than in it. And I may tell you, between ourselves, that for that reason one can pretty well reckon on making one's company select by a few artful looks round. The sheep and the goats separate

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as if by instinct at a whisper of Scotland Yard."

"But," said I, smiling, "at that rate I'm the only sheep."

He laughed.

"Well, I shouldn't say that, except in the best sense," said he.

And then he asked if he might smoke, and we both fell into silence, while I wondered whether I too should have changed my compartment if the wound in my foot had not made it still inconvenient to me to move about very fast. For I remembered that, though I certainly had no very heavy burdens on my conscience, I had myself not been without a transitory qualm of uneasiness when the detective's piercing eyes had been fixed upon me in my turn.

What troubled me chiefly was the fact that my pretty girl had apparently had the worst conscience of us all, since it was she who had been the first to disappear. It was extraordinary how greatly this thought troubled me, and I was quite glad to be diverted from my musings on this head by my companion, who, apparently soothed and rendered genial by the influence of his pipe, began to entertain me with some of his adventures as a thief-taker, until I became too much interested to think of anything else.

He was so much more entertaining than my late companions had been that the time passed quickly, and I was quite surprised when the train began to slow down, and I discovered that we had reached Carlisle. The snow was by this time coming down so fast that our rate of progress was perceptibly slower, and the detective, who told me his name was Birch, began to express doubts whether we should be able to get on to Edinburgh without accident.

"I've been snowed up on this line before now," he said, with a shake of the head. "Up in this part of the country one gets it worse than in the south."

In spite of the falling snow, however, I saw that he was making ready to get out, for he took down his Gladstone bag from the rack and prepared to let down the window. As he did so he kept his face close to the glass, peering out with his sharp eyes into the darkness.

"Do you get out here?" I asked, in surprise, for I had understood that he was making the entire journey.

"Only for a moment," he answered, quickly, in a low voice. And I wondered whether he suspected my honesty, since he appeared unwilling to trust me alone with his property.

A few moments later we drew into the station, and I heard the door of the next compartment open. My companion had drawn back a little, but he was watching as keenly as ever. A couple of seconds after I had heard the next door open, and had seen a man hurrying down towards the refreshment-room, the detective let down the window very quietly and, with remarkable quickness, got out of our compartment and into the next, carrying his bag with him.

I decided that something interesting was going to happen, since he and the suspected



"HE HAD DISAPPEARED AND REAPPEARED SO RAPIDLY, SO QUIETLY, THAT I WAS LOST IN ADMIRATION AND WONDER."

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thief would be travelling together. So I slid along my seat to the window which looked upon the platform. To my surprise, however, Birch was back again in a few moments, his bag still in his hand, and a look of considerable satisfaction on his somewhat stolid face. He had disappeared and reappeared so rapidly, so quietly, that I was lost in admiration and wonder. But before we exchanged any remark I saw the suspected man hurrying up along the platform, and pressed my face against the glass to get a good view of him. He was a well-dressed, clean-shaven man, spare and active-looking, of middle age, and he looked like a gentleman's servant. The expression of his face, though, betrayed that he was not what he seemed. It appeared to me that there was an expression of furtive anxiety in his eyes as he turned them towards the window of our compartment; and I wondered whether he had any notion that he was being followed and watched.

A few moments later we were again on our way. But now, as my companion had predicted, we found our progress so much impeded by the snow that I also began to have grave fears that we should not reach Edinburgh in the early hours of the morning, as we ought to have done. My companion had by this time put his bag upon the seat, and, standing with his back to me, was feeling in his pockets for the key.

"It's not of much use trying to get anything to eat on these journeys," said he, "even if one were travelling for one's own pleasure and had time to look about one. I always come provided. I suppose you're supplied also, or may I offer you some sandwiches?"

I thanked him, but said I had brought my own. All this time he was fumbling for his keys, and at last he turned to me with a rather long face.

"By Jove!" said he, in a tone of annoyance, "I've left them behind! I shall have to force the lock."

"Oh, it's not worth while just for a sandwich. Have some of mine," I said, and I began to hunt in my own bag for the refreshments with which I had been carefully provided.

But he would not listen to this; and wrenching open his bag with a pocket-knife he fumbled about in it, and transferred two or three small parcels into the capacious pockets of his overcoat. Then he strapped up the bag again, pushed it under the seat, and, again plunging his hands into his overcoat pockets, produced from one a box of sandwiches and from another a flask, and we proceeded to sup together; not with the same cheerfulness that we had shown a few minutes before, but with apprehension growing strong upon us that we should not see Edinburgh within the next four-and-twenty hours.

Indeed, we were going more and more slowly, and the snow was falling in such blinding showers that it was impossible to discern any object on either side of us as we went along. Before very long the expected happened—the train came slowly to a stop.

Birch rose from his seat in evident anxiety. He had made no remark to me concerning his brief visit to the adjoining compartment, and I had, therefore, been too discreet to allude to it myself. But when the stopping of the train brought our fears to a head he became suddenly communicative.

"I must wire up to London," he said in a low voice, rather to himself than to me, "or we may lose him after all."

From which I gathered that in his lightning visit he had satisfied himself as to the identity of his "man."

"Where are we?" asked I.

"I can't say I know myself," he answered, "but I don't think it's long since we passed a station of some kind. I saw lights close to the line some minutes ago." He was standing up with a reflective frown upon his face. We could hear voices, and the noise of opening doors and windows. Nervous passengers were calling the guard. Birch opened the door.

"I must get back there somehow," he said, desperately. And turning to me as he stepped out, he added:—

"You won't mind looking after my bag till I come back, will you?"

"Certainly not," said I, while it occurred to me to be amused that he should trust me with his luggage now that the lock was broken, while he had been so particular when it was intact.

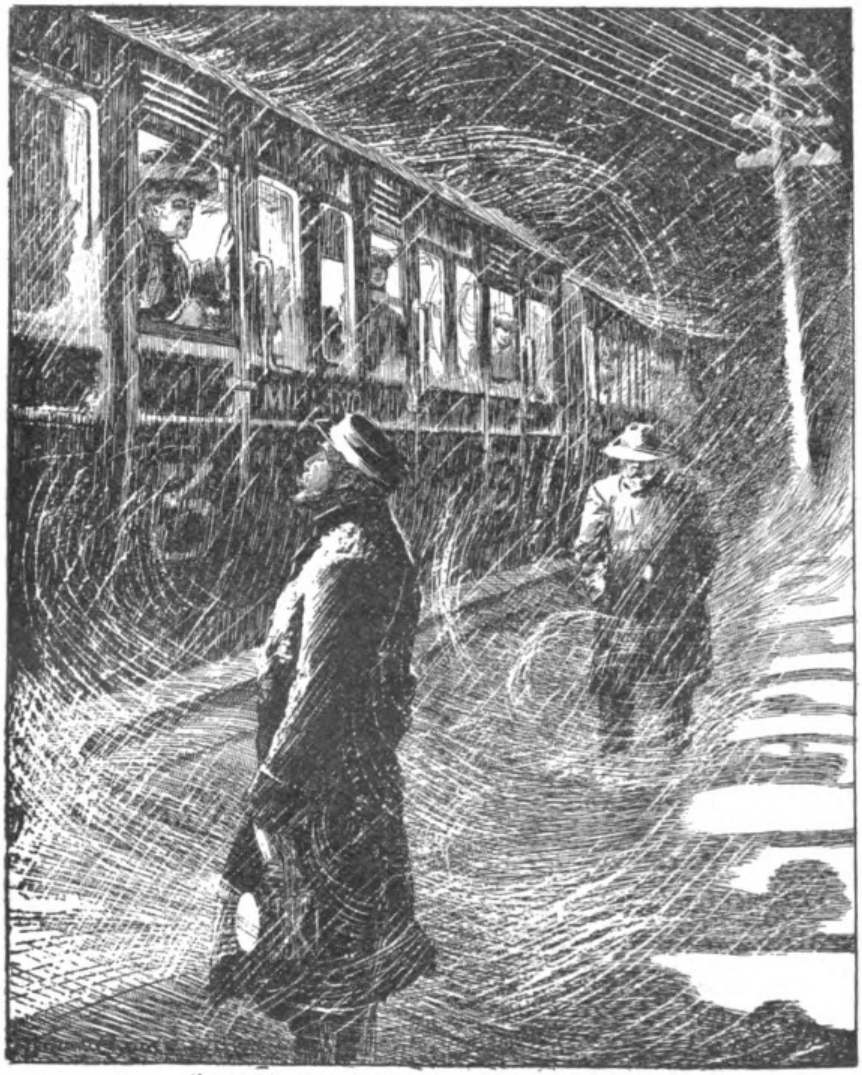
The snow was so thick that he was lost to sight almost as soon as his feet reached the earth, where he sank, and I could not even hear the sound of his footsteps on the snowy ground.

Indeed, the rest of the passengers were by this time making such a clamour that no one sound could be discerned above the din. The guard was philosophic, desperate; there was a drift in front of us, he said, and the engine could not get through. There was a driving wind, blowing the snow in clouds to the east of us, and he reckoned we might

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think ourselves lucky if we were not snowed up altogether, since, though we had been able to get thus far, it was by no means certain that we should be able to get back again ; for drifts that we had been able to plough through half an hour before might be impassable by this time.

The consternation was general and acute.



"THE CONSTERNATION WAS GENERAL AND ACUTE."

The train was not very full, the badness of the weather having interfered with the traffic, which is usually heavy so near to Christmas. Still, there were enough of us to make a great noise, and I distinctly heard the voice of the florid lady who had been one of my travelling-companions in the earlier part of the journey, alternately uttering threats against the railway company and pleading to the guard to make one more effort to get forward. But this was impossible ; and we should have been in sorry plight but for the approach of a stalwart northerner, who had seen from afar that something was wrong, and who had come up to inform us that he had an inn not many hundred yards away, and that if some of us would accompany him thither he and his wife would do the best they could for us.

The passengers, as one man, accepted the invitation. Taking our light luggage with us and leaving the rest to its fate, we were streaming after our host through mountains of soft snow when I bethought me that I was in some sort responsible for the detective's bag, and decided to take it with me.

As I was lame, however, I had to get help in carrying both his and my own luggage, and I made my way so slowly that by the time I reached the little inn I found its accommodation stretched to the utmost by this sudden influx of visitors.

My fellow-travellers of the early part of the journey, who had, I imagine, spread themselves about in different parts of the train, had now instinctively foregathered again, and were sitting in a group by the fire in the stone-flagged kitchen, all but the pretty girl with the fair hair, who was by herself in a distant corner.

Every chair being by this time occupied, and even the deal table and the coal-box having been converted into seats, I put the detective's bag on the top of my own and, regardless of the consequences to their contents, made myself a seat of them.

I observed that a certain constraint appeared to fall upon these good people at my approach, and presently the young Scotchman glanced at my heap of luggage and said :—

"I'm thinking ye are not like the Yankee who can travel round the world with a tooth-brush and a paper collar, sir."

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I laughed a little.

"Oh, this isn't all mine," I said. "I'm taking care of part of it for a chance travelling-companion."

At once I caught, not only upon his face, but on the faces of his companions, a look which told me they considered this remark a perversion of the truth. And it flashed through my mind that they took me for a detective also, and thought that my remaining in the carriage when they all left it was a proof of this. Coupled with my care of his luggage, no doubt it seemed a conclusive proof.

I was much tickled with this idea, and resolved, for the fun of the thing, to live up to my new character.

"Oh, yes, quite a chance companion," I repeated, truly enough, but with just sufficient emphasis to confirm them in their own opinion.

"And where may he be gone?" asked the City man, with assumed carelessness.

"Oh, just to send off a wire from the nearest station to give news of our mishap."

A manifest ripple of uneasiness passed over the whole party. This was curious, but the fact that the pretty girl in the distant corner shared the general feeling worried me again not a little. There was silence among us for a few moments. The rest of the passengers in the room chatted and grumbled, but my group fidgeted in their seats and watched me furtively. When at last the silence was broken, and they began to talk again, even noisily, as if to appear at their ease, the sanctimonious man in the gold spectacles, who was sitting beside me on the coal-box, spoke confidentially in my ear:—

"And who may you be after, sir? We know very well that you are from Scotland Yard also. And I suppose you're both on business."

I was considerably surprised by this address, and I felt a malicious pleasure in maintaining his anxiety, as there was something piquant in the discovery of a guilty conscience under such a smug and sanctimonious manner.

"By-the-bye," I said, turning to look well in his face, but keeping my tone at the same level as his, "what made you leave the carriage so quickly just because another passenger got into it?"

The man stammered a little before answering.

"I—I—I would not willingly be present to see a fellow-creature's pain and distress," he then said, solemnly.

"No, Mr. Smith; I dare say not," I answered.

It was amusing to see the shock the sound of his own name gave him.

"How—how did you know——"

Then he faltered and stopped. Indeed, my knowledge had been arrived at very simply, for he had been passing the time by reading a second-hand book, on several pages of which the name "Robert Smith" was impressed with a common rubber stamp. I said nothing, however, but looked very wise. Growing more and more uneasy, he at length jumped up, dragged me back into a corner near the dresser, and whispered hurriedly in my ear:—

"If you've come to arrest me for deserting my wife and family, I can explain everything; I——"

But I cut him short, appalled by the discoveries I had innocently made.

"Oh, that's all right. I know nothing about that," I said, hastily, as I tried to get away.

The man actually staggered back a step against the dresser, his forehead white and glistening under the wide-brimmed black hat which he was still wearing. I heard him utter a broken murmur of thankfulness as he let me go, and it was evident, as he presently followed me back to his place in the group, that a great burden had been taken off his mind.

As his brow cleared, however, it was plain to me that those of his companions clouded still more. And after a little interchange of speech with me, in which his manner was half bumptious and half deferential, the man on the other side of me, the City man, as I had decided that he must be, whispered to me in his turn.

"Do you happen to know anything about this Turf fraud they're trying to keep so dark?" he said, in a would-be airy manner.

"Oh, yes, I know a great deal about it," I cried, promptly.

He rubbed his chin and looked at me askance.

"If you think I had anything to do with it," he said, sullenly, in a low voice, "you're mistaken. But I tell you what: I can give you the straight tip as to the men who were in it," he added, in a lower voice than ever.

I took out my pocket-book with assumed alacrity.

"Your name first, please," I said, trying to look very knowing as I bit my pencil.

"Oh, you know my name well enough," said he, shortly. "Granby Hillier, of Fen-

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church Street, that's my name, and I've never been known by any other."

As I was not anxious for his further communications, having carried the joke far enough with him, I shut up my pocket-book suddenly, as if this last piece of information made me doubtful of his good faith. The action frightened him very much.

"Do you mean to say," he hissed into my ear, "that you or your pal have got a warrant for my arrest?"

"I haven't, certainly," said I; "and if he has I haven't heard of it."

The man looked hard at me and heaved a sigh of relief. Satisfied in his turn, he left the seat beside me and went out into the bar. The next moment the important-looking lady with the numerous hat-boxes took the seat he had left. It was evident that her nervousness had got the better of her discretion, for she began without any opening at all.

"If you think I'm leaving London to avoid paying my debts," she said, in an agitated whisper, "you are wrong, quite wrong. And as for my calling myself Madame Maude, why, that's nothing. All ladies of social position, when they take up millinery or anything of that sort, do it under another name."

"I am perfectly aware of that, madam," said I, politely; and I added, truly enough, "and if you were to use a dozen names I assure you I should consider it no concern of mine."

She looked at me hard, as if not quite certain whether this was satisfactory or not. But I think she at last came slowly to the conclusion that I meant her no harm, for she gave me a gracious bend of the head, and said, with a smile which was meant to be sweet, but which was still rather quivery:—

"Oh, I could see at a glance that you were a gentleman; otherwise I should not have said so much to you."



"'IF YOU THINK I'M LEAVING LONDON TO AVOID PAYING MY DEBTS,' SHE SAID, 'YOU ARE WRONG.'"

The first part of this sentence I thought hardly tallied with the last; but I returned her smile, and was glad when she turned to busy herself with her numerous parcels.

After this experience I could scarcely be surprised when the young Scotchman engaged me in confidential discourse, and I felt much interested in wondering what his particular peccadillo would turn out to be. But he was cute and canny, after the manner of his race, and though he held me in conversation for a long time and touched upon all sorts of subjects, I not only failed to discover whether he too had a wholesome fear of the law's grip, but I fancied that he guessed the truth concerning me. At any rate, I noticed him examining very carefully, though as if casually, the luggage on which I was seated, and there was a smug air of satisfaction on his face when he had done with me.

Of all my five fellow-passengers there remained now only my pretty girl uninter-

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viewed, and I own I was very anxious to be addressed by her, and to make her mind easy, should that be necessary, as I could not but feel that it was. For indeed I could see her eyes watching me from behind her gauze veil as I moved about.

She did not, however, address me of her own accord, as the others had done; and at last I, overcome by my own anxiety to speak comfort to her, seized the occasion of the entrance of a woman with some tea for the ladies of the party to take the initiative in addressing her.

So I took a cup of tea from the tray, and made my way into the corner where she sat alone. She seemed to shrink into herself as I approached, but I cannot help thinking she felt some sort of reassurance as soon as I spoke to her, offering her the welcome refreshment as gently as I could.

She took the cup, and, forced to raise her veil a little, showed me a face even more attractive than I had supposed. I found myself stoutly denying, in my own mind, the possibility that this fair and sweet young creature could have anything very heavy on her conscience, and yet there was a sort of entreaty in her eyes which made me wonder.

I followed up my first attention by others, bringing her cakes and sandwiches, and trying to arrange the curtain of the little window behind her in such a manner as to keep out the draught. And all the while I talked to her, not trying to make her talk in return, but striving to put her at her ease.

I think she began to look at me with less suspicion, and at last she expressed a courteous regret that I should move about so much on her account.

"Oh! Because of my foot?" said I. "That's nothing. I had a shot through it fighting out in Africa, but the lameness has nearly gone now, and it looks worse than it is."

I could see that she was looking at me earnestly through her veil.

"You have been in Africa, fighting? And you've just come back?" she said, in an anxious voice scarcely above a whisper. "Then—then you're not——"

Her voice sank and died away.

"I'm not anybody to be afraid of," I answered, in a low voice, "but I've been amusing myself by pretending that I am to those people over there."

The tears rushed suddenly to her eyes, and her voice trembled as she said: "Oh, but you shouldn't do that! You don't know how much misery you may be causing! Surely, surely——"

I was so much moved by her emotion that I could not at first answer her.

At last I said:—

"Surely we need not waste much compassion upon wrong-doers, for they certainly must be wrong-doers if their consciences are so very tender!"

"You are too hard," said she, quickly. "Everybody is a wrong-doer, more or less, at some time or other, and very often it is more by misfortune or by weakness than by wickedness. It seems to me that cruelty is as bad as crime."

I looked at her earnestly. Her face, her voice, her manner, all seemed to me to inspire a perfect belief that she herself was the most innocent of human creatures.

"At any rate," I said, "no one would be hard or cruel to anybody for whom you were to plead!"

A change came over her face. It broke up into an infinite tenderness.

"If I could only believe that!" faltered she.

And in an instant I understood that it was not upon her own account, but upon that of another, that she was in such distress. Realizing, with a quick look of terror, that she had in a measure betrayed herself, the pretty girl bit her lip, rose hurriedly, and looked at the hanging Dutch clock on the wall.

"How long do you think it will be," she went on, nervously, "before we can get on to Edinburgh?"

"A week, perhaps," said I, rashly.

I was sorry the next moment, for the tears rushed to her pretty blue eyes.

"Then it will be too late," said she, below her breath, in a tone of anguish. And then some instinct, some impulse, made her turn to me again, and looking up into my face with the most piteous look of entreaty she whispered: "Oh, sir, if you can do anything to help me to get on with my journey I do beg you to do it! I'm sure you would if you knew how much depends on it—the safety, the salvation, of one very near and dear to me, my only brother."

"I would do anything I could," said I, earnestly; "but——"

"If there is any way of going on, no matter how difficult or even dangerous," she went on, still in a whisper, and with her veil now quite raised, so that I could see every movement of her beautiful eyes, every quiver of her lips, "let me know of it—let me try it. Listen! I'm sure you would not betray a confidence. I don't know why, but I do

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feel sure of that. It is a matter almost of life and death to me. I have to find a sum of money within two days to save a great disgrace, a great sorrow. I can, I think, get it in Edinburgh from some relations; but if I can't get to them within that time it will be too late, and I shall break my heart."

I was distressed beyond measure by her words, even while I was conscious that the eyes of the young Scotchman were fixed upon us with a sort of shrewd malevolence which was disconcerting. I assured her that I would make inquiries as to the possibility of proceeding, and did my best to keep up her hopes, even though I could not but feel something like despair of her attaining her object.

We were still talking earnestly in a low voice when I was startled to see a face pressed against the glass of the latticed window from the outside. Looking out I recognised the face of the man who had occupied the next compartment to mine in the train—the thief who had carried off the jewels.

The cause of the terrible expression on his face only became clear to me in the light of after events. He had discovered the loss of the stolen property, and his haggard eyes and look of fierce despair were shocking to see.

He looked at everybody in the room, staring in with bloodshot eyes, but disappeared when an exclamation from my lips drew the attention of the occupants to him.

The men went to the window and tried to look out, but the snow was still falling too thickly for them to be able to do so.

The appearance of this haggard and ghastly face, however, pressed close to the window-panes, had filled everybody with some uncanny sense of approaching misfortune. The women uttered faint screams, and there grew among us all a vague sense that some tragedy was happening, or about to happen.

The men began to file out into the bar, leaving the rest of the company in a state of suspense and uneasiness, which was increased when a loud murmur of voices, swelling with excitement, came into the room.

"What is it? What is happening?" asked the stout lady, nervously.

I was going out in my turn, in spite of my lameness, to see what was wrong, when the door of the room burst open, and Mr. Granby Hillier came in, much excited and apparently somewhat relieved.

"What is it?" asked the Scotchman, who was the only man besides myself who had remained in the room. "What's a' the excitement?"

"There's been a robbery," cried he, "a great jewel robbery, and the thief was in the very same train with us."

The ladies exclaimed and asked a dozen



"HE OPENED ONE AND SHOWED THAT IT CONTAINED A HANDSOME DIAMOND BRACELET."

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questions, but the young Scotchman and I held our tongues.

"Luckily," went on Granby Hillier, "there were two detectives after him—in the train, too."

"Detectives! Ah!"

The ladies looked interested and relieved at the same time. Poor Madame Maude, especially, gave a soft sigh of contentment. There was a worse malefactor than herself abroad!

"So they've caught him?" said she.

"Not yet. But he's been seen close by this house, and we may hope at any moment——"

He was interrupted by a shout from outside. We were by this time all upon our feet. But those of us who would have rushed out to learn the news were prevented by a sudden inrush of people from the bar. They entered in a body, bringing with them a strong perfume of whisky toddy.

"Here's one of the 'tecs' coming in here," explained Granby Hillier, in a loud whisper.

But it was not my friend of the train who came in, with a group of interested observers at his heels. It was a tall, thin man, with grizzled hair and whiskers, in a long, light overcoat and heavy muffler. He was a disappointing person after my friend, commonplace-looking, and without any particular keenness of eye. Moreover, he did not wear policeman's boots, and I felt inclined to doubt his pretensions.

However, he came into the room, looked round casually, and asked if he could see the light luggage which had been brought from the train. With the greatest alacrity most of those present offered their bags and their parcels for his inspection; but I stood by the pretty girl's side without offering mine. The Scotchman, however, officiously dragged my luggage into view.

"Maybe ye'll care to see these things; they're the property of the young gentleman over yonder," said he, with a glance of malice, which I attributed to a sort of jealousy he felt at my companion's honouring me with her conversation.

The detective, who was closely followed by the landlord, looked at the luggage and then at me. I came forward and explained, in a low voice, that one of the bags was mine.

"The other," said I, "was left in my charge by your colleague."

He looked into the bag which did not belong to me, and then he gazed steadily at me. And as he did so the Scotchman sniggered.

Then, for the first time, a glimmering of the truth broke in upon me. Cold from head to foot, I struggled for my breath, and said, hoarsely:—

"Surely, surely you don't take *me* for a thief?"

The man in the long overcoat still looked at me in the same stolidly irritating way.

"Oh, no, sir, that's not what I take you for," said he. "But—would you mind coming with me a minute?"

I felt cold from head to foot, and the self-satisfied expression of smug content with the turn things were taking which I saw in the face of the Scotchman made me angry as well as anxious. All the group round us began instinctively to draw away from me, as I was suddenly conscious. Only the pretty young girl made a movement in my favour. Taking a step towards me, she smiled up in my face, and said:—

"And I'll take care of your things till you come back."

The words were not much, but the comfort they gave me was so great that I could scarcely stammer out a conventional word of thanks.

Then, feeling that I was an object of suspicion to everyone but her, I went out with the man in the long overcoat.

He led me past the bar, up the narrow staircase, and unlocked a door on the upper floor.

"Go in, please," said he. And he followed me in, still carrying the bag of which I had taken charge.

The room was of fair size, and was evidently used for lodge-meetings and farmers' dinners. On the long table stood two lamps, and at the end sat three men. One of them was the man who had run away with the jewels, and whose face I had seen at the window downstairs; the second was unknown to me; and the third was Birch.

I had had an uncanny fear that Birch, of the shrewd eyes and the policeman's boots, would turn out to be somebody else when I next met him. But he pushed back his chair, looked up at me as I entered, and burst out laughing. I gave a sigh of relief.

"You've taken care of my bag, I hope?" said he.

"Oh, yes," said I. "At least, I've given it—I've had it taken——"

And, without finishing my speech, I glanced at the man who had brought me in—the man in the long coat. He, however, was taking no

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notice of me. He placed the bag in front of the suspicious traveller from the next compartment to ours.

"Is this your bag?" said he.

"Yes," said the man, at once. "This is it. And look; here are some of the cases left at the bottom."

He pulled out, as he spoke, some shabby leather jewel-cases, and then he opened one and showed that it contained a handsome diamond bracelet.

"Ha! ha!" laughed Birch, from his seat at the table.

But the speaker took no notice of him.

"No doubt," he went on, "he emptied all he could into his pockets and left what he couldn't carry away."

I looked at Birch again, but he made no remark. I was getting puzzled once more. The man who was talking did not now look like a thief. He looked like a respectable gentleman's servant, and now that his expression was no longer furtive and anxious his appearance and manner were not unprepossessing. He went on:—

"I wasn't gone from the carriage more than a minute, and when I came back my bag was gone and another put in its place. I didn't find it out till the accident, when I dragged it out from under the seat, and saw that it had been exchanged for another like it. The fellow must have watched me when I've been in charge of her ladyship's jewels before."

"Ha! ha!" laughed Birch again.

And then I saw that he was handcuffed.

"Good heavens!" cried I. "Then—then you're not a detective at all?"

"No," said Birch, insolently; "but I pass very well for one—with the mugs!"

The remark was exceedingly pointed, and I grew red. More than that, I felt sick and cold with the shock of this discovery, and with the fear that I was suspected of being the man's accomplice. I staggered a little, and when the man in the long coat gave me his arm I made sure he meant to arrest me.

"I—I know nothing about it—really!" stammered I.

"Bless you, sir! Of course you don't. You're as innocent as a babe," said he.

This was meant to be reassuring, but I confess I should have preferred a different form of words. I felt more and more keenly the sense they all had of my gullibility as the man in the long coat good-naturedly made clear to me what had happened.

My supposed detective, Birch, was an expert thief, who had found out that the jewels of a certain very great lady were to be sent to her by train by a confidential and trusted servant who had frequently been employed on similar errands. As he was a member of a gang who devoted their time to these matters, Birch knew that it was the



"THEY HAD NO PRETTY MARY MALLOW TO CONSOLE THEM."

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custom for this servant to carry the jewels in a common Gladstone bag, to avoid exciting suspicions as to the value of the parcel. He had therefore provided himself with a similar bag, and had deftly exchanged the one for the other on the first opportunity.

Then, transferring as much of the jewellery as he could conveniently carry from the bag to his own pockets, he had left the bag itself in my care, and he would probably have succeeded in making his escape but for the mishap, which had caused the servant to find out his loss almost immediately.

This latter had given the alarm to a couple of real detectives who had been sent by the same train as the servant, by way of extra precaution. One of them, seated in the next compartment to the servant, had seen the entrance and departure from the carriage of Birch, and when the accident happened and the alarm was given he had little difficulty in identifying the escaping thief, whom he and his colleague promptly brought to bay and overhauled.

To turn out his pockets, recover the stolen property, and then to handcuff and to take him to the inn were their next cares. And when I was brought in with the missing bag the smallest details of the robbery were made clear.

It was with a burning face and an uneasy sense of my own stupidity that I went downstairs again, leaving the thief, the servant, and the two detectives together.

The sore point with me was that the miserable Scotchman looked upon me as the greatest duffer that ever drew breath, and piqued himself upon his discernment in finding it out.

To my secret satisfaction, however, things turned out differently from what I had expected. No sooner had I re-entered the room where I had left my travelling-companions than the Scotchman sprang up, scared and pale, ejaculating in unmistakable dismay :—

"Then ye're no the thief?"

Quick to take advantage of this, I drew myself up and said, quietly :—

"The thief! No, not exactly. But I'm very happy to have been of use in running the scoundrel to earth."

The sensation caused by these words was indescribable. All the travellers talked at once, asking questions, and trying to prove that they had never themselves had the least doubt of the truth.

"They had, though," whispered my pretty girl to me, presently, when the commotion had calmed down a little and the group had become broken into twos and threes. "They all followed the lead of that Scotchman, who thought you had been arrested too."

We laughed together over this little joke, for my pretty companion's spirits were rising since the information had been brought in that the snow had ceased to fall and that in a short time it was hoped the line might be clear enough for us to continue our journey.

By the time we did so I had learnt that my heroine's name was Mary Mallow, and that we had some friends in common, by means of whom I had already made up my mind to improve my acquaintance with this, the sweetest girl I had ever met. I sympathized with her anxiety for the young brother who had, in a weak moment, done the rash act from the consequences of which she hoped to rescue him by an appeal to their relations. And I had already made up my mind on one of the most important subjects in the world to a previously heart-whole young man.

A certain reserve on the part of the rest of our travelling-companions, engendered by the remembrance of their rash confessions to me, helped to throw us two together.

And in the pleasure I felt in her society I was able to overcome the annoyance caused by Birch, who, as he walked over the snow towards the train between the two real detectives, said to me as he passed :—

"Good-bye, old pal! I wish I could come across a few more of your sort, that I do!"

I felt myself grow red under the taunt; but after all, if I had made some mistakes on that journey, my fellow-passengers had made more.

And they had no pretty Mary Mallow to console them!

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To Meet Charles Dickens.

WRITTEN AND ILLUSTRATED BY HARRY FURNISS.



IN my article on "Autograph Hunters" in the last number of THE STRAND MAGAZINE I omitted to mention a curious case in New York five years ago. I was making an afternoon call, to wish a literary friend a merry Christmas, when his two daughters, about fifteen and sixteen years of age, came in armed with their autograph albums.

"As this is Christmas Day it would be just sweet of you, Mr. Furniss, to give us a sketch of that love of a man, Charles Dickens. We reckon he must have been an intimate acquaintance of yours in London, England."

This startling supposition so surprised me that I all but dropped the pen on the nice clean page.

"Bless you, children, when Charles Dickens died I was, unfortunately, only your age. One of my regrets in life has been that I was not born ten years sooner; then I might not only have known Charles Dickens, but possibly I might have been doing then what I am engaged upon now—illustrating the works of the immortal humorist*. But if you ever come to London you shall do a Dickens tramp and I will be your guide."

This "fall" I carried out my promise. I showed the charming American "gurls" the Old Curiosity Shop that wasn't the Old Curiosity Shop; I showed them where Tom All-Alone's had been, but where the ground is now County Councilled flat. I showed them places associated with Dickens north, south, east, and west of London. After seeing them back to their hotel I hurried home. Being thoroughly tired out I fell to sleep in the arm-chair in my studio, with two things running in my mind—Dickens and dinner.

"Telegram, sir."

"Thanks."

The telegram ran:—

"Just received your invitation to dinner Christmas Day. I accept with pleasure. How are the drawings getting on? Mr. Pickwick and his motor suggests great possibilities. From Charles Dickens, Gad's Hill."

I woke laughing. What a funny idea!

"Well," thought I, "suppose my dream were a true one, whom should I ask to meet Charles Dickens?"

No one questions the fact that Charles Dickens popularized Christmas in England. "I will honour Christmas in my heart, I will live in the Past, the Present, and the Future. The spirits of all three shall strive within me. I will not shut out the lessons that they teach."

The lessons Charles Dickens taught are remembered to this day. It is at Christmas time that the thoughts of thousands turn to Dickens; even the thoughts of those who do not read Dickens and do not keep Christmas think of him who made Christmas sentiments household words. "Christmas time! The man must be a misanthrope indeed in whose breast something like a jovial feeling is not roused—in whose mind some pleasant associations are not awakened—by the recurrence of Christmas." This sentiment is applicable to the writer of it. Every Christmas Dickens's name rises before us, and we are reminded of some pleasant associations either with Dickens personally or with him through his Christmas creations.

I would invite such as these—men who either knew him or were associated with his work. I would make up a Christmas party to meet Dickens, as he himself wrote: "Who can be insensible to the outpourings of good feeling, and the honest interchange of affectionate attachment, which abound at this season of the year? A Christmas family party! We know nothing in Nature more delightful. There seems a magic in the very name of Christmas." The magic was that I found myself inviting Charles Dickens to meet those still living whom he either knew or ought to know.

It is not to be a dinner such as Dickens

* I began to illustrate Charles Dickens's works about seven years ago, but in consequence of other business I make slow progress.

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describes in "Little Dorrit," of "the rarest dishes, sumptuously cooked and sumptuously served; the choicest fruits; the most exquisite wines; marvels of workmanship in gold and silver, china and glass; innumerable things delicious to the senses of taste, smell, and sight." When my guests arrive there will be "something peculiar in their air and manner, though you could hardly describe what it is; you cannot divest yourself of the idea that they have come for some other purpose than mere eating and drinking."

To parody a description of a dinner-party in "Our Mutual Friend": The great looking-glass above the sideboard reflects the table and the company. Reflects the chair from the study at Gad's Hill in which Dickens sat and wrote so much of his work. Reflects Lord James of Hereford, president of the Boz Club; reflects Lord Brampton, who knew Dickens so well; reflects the accomplished Hamilton Aidé; reflects my old friend J. Ashby Sterry, whose graceful pen keeps the memory of Dickens green; reflects F. G. Kitton, who is the Dickens compiler and chronicler of the time; reflects the handsome presence of my friend Arthur à Beckett, who knew Dickens and wrote for him, together with Mr. Moy Thomas, Sir Edward Dicey, and Dickens's dear old friend Dean Hole. Reflects the pleasant, legal, and anything but Buzfuzzian face of Dickens's acquaintance, Mr. Inderwick, K.C., and many other mutual friends, not the least interesting and charming of all being that grand old illustrator and cartoonist Sir John Tenniel; for, as is natural, I first hold out my hand to greet the artists who worked with Dickens, or knew him.



MR. MARCUS STONE, R.A., ILLUSTRATOR OF "OUR MUTUAL FRIEND."

No living artist was better acquainted with Charles Dickens than Mr. Marcus Stone, R.A. He is the son of the late Frank Stone, A.R.A., a conventional painter of a type of picture such as "The First Appeal" and "The Last Appeal," which found favour with the public in the early Victorian era. Through this intimacy of his father with Dickens young Stone got the chance of illustrating the author; in fact, Dickens, with a kindness peculiar to him, did all he could to start the "son of poor Frank Stone" as an illustrator. The title of the book, "Our Mutual Friend," was therefore happily suggestive as the one for him to illustrate, followed by "Great Expectations," which, however, were not realized altogether, as Mr. Marcus Stone abandoned illustrating for painting—in which there is nothing in evidence to show any influence of his early patron, Dickens. Although he has declared that "as a man Dickens influenced my life enormously," his art shows it not; in fact, he has honestly confessed that, although he was greatly struck with the dramatic force of Dombey's paternal pride in the birth of his heir, while he cared little for his daughter, being determined to paint a picture on the subject, he was forced to paint Dombey as Henry VIII., Paul as Edward VI., and Florence as Princess Elizabeth.

My eye will be attracted to Mr. Luke Fildes, who has sketched on the back of the menu one of the famous characters from "Edwin Drood." There is a sadness in Mr. Fildes's look, for he always thinks of that unfinished work and of the empty chair which he painted at Gad's Hill immediately after his newly-found friend had breathed his last.

It was in "Edwin Drood" (chapter xiv.) that Dickens for the last time described his beloved Christmas time, "Christmas Eve in Cloisterham," the striking of the cathedral clock and the cawing of the rooks from the cathedral tower, "when the circle of their lines was very nearly traced, and the beginning and the end were drawing close together." At that time poor Dickens's life was very nearly traced, and the beginning and the end were rapidly drawing close together!

Mr. Luke Fildes is not afraid of modern dress, as is shown by his pictures entitled "The Doctor," "The Village Wedding," and "The Return of the Penitent"; and more important than all these, "The Casuals." It was the appearance of the latter subject in the first number of the *Graphic* which,

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MR. LUKE FILDES, R.A., ILLUSTRATOR OF "THE MYSTERY OF EDWIN DROOD."

brought under the notice of Charles Dickens, ended by Mr. Fildes illustrating his unfinished work, "The Mystery of Edwin Drood." The "mystery" was buried with the author. In illustrating Dickens, Mr. Fildes found him difficult to please and rather puzzling to work with. Dickens was determined that the mystery should be a secret, and reluctantly gave sufficient details for the pictures to illustrate the story. In one instance the great author showed an extraordinary lack of perception. "I want you to draw the man creeping up the winding stairs to the belfry; he must have no lamp—there must be no light of any kind, and no moon; the man must have the face of——"

"But," interrupted the artist, "without any light whatever how can I show a face?"

Dickens laughingly replied, "Oh, I never thought of that."

The mirror in my dining-room will also reflect the interesting head of the Hon. Sir Charles Gavan Duffy, K.C.M.G., and my old and treasured friend, Mr. F. D. Finlay. These two Irishmen were intimate with Dickens, and I shall overhear them comparing notes as to Charles Dickens's utter want of appreciation of Irish humour. In no book does he touch upon Irish wit or introduce an Irish character. I understand by the letters of these two that in Dickens's estimation the Irish have no humour; it appeared to him that the Irishman either spoke as a fool or was insolent. One has told the story how he tried to explain to Dickens that this was not so and gave the Irish definition of nothing—"a footless stocking without a leg." Dickens, when this was mentioned to him, shook his head, and could not see any humour in it. Then the other has recorded how he tried to explain Irish humour to Dickens by mentioning the fact that Irish people invariably build strong stone walls round their chapels and churches to keep out the pigs and the cows. When they were building a wall around a certain church in his neighbourhood the workmen pulled down the church to supply the stones with which to build the wall. The peculiarly Irish humour here, however, Dickens failed entirely to grasp.

Mr. F. D. Finlay was proprietor and editor of the *Northern Whig*, and when Charles Dickens visited Belfast to give his readings he stopped with Mr. Finlay. To look at the evergreen Frank Finlay one would hardly believe that he is old enough to remember those fortunate days, and to keep the company in good humour with his genial, bright stories and memories of Dickens.

The other celebrated Irishman, Sir Charles Gavan Duffy, the oldest and most interesting guest I shall ask, was born in 1816. Although springing from a family of eminent scholars and ecclesiastics, he jumped into notoriety as an Irish Nationalist writer and editor, and by being tried and convicted of sedition in company with Dan O'Connell. The House of Lords set aside the conviction. He was subsequently unsuccessfully tried for treason-felony. At



HON. SIR CHARLES GAVAN DUFFY, K.C.M.G.—"ANOTHER INJUSTICE TO IRELAND."

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MR. G. A. STOREY, A.R.A.

the polls he opposed the Government Under-Secretary who had prosecuted him—defeated him, and entered Parliament. In those days the Independent Irish Party in the House of Commons was very different from the familiar object of the Dependent Irish Party of to-day. And in looking back Dickens's old acquaintance must see the truth of the author's words in "Martin Chuzzlewit": "The mine which Time has slowly dug beneath familiar objects is sprung in an instant; and what was rock before becomes but sand and dust. Most men, at one time or other, have proved this in some degree." Certainly no man more than Sir Charles Gavan Duffy, for he, when forty-six, gave up all the exciting political Irish struggle and Parliamentary life in Great Britain and emigrated to Australia. He practised at the Bar in Melbourne, became Minister of Public Works, Prime Minister, Speaker of the Legislative Chamber, etc. After twenty-four years he returned to England and to literature, and a year ago became president of the newly-founded Irish Literary Society, London. But this is digression. I am forgetting my artist guests.

Another artist who looks back with gratitude to Dickens I note sketching a little boy who, with a great lump of clay in front of him, is seated in the sculptor's studio, beginning his art career, and tells once more the story of when he was engaged in this artistic effort. "A bright, lively young man, good-looking, and with dark flowing locks, entered the studio, accompanied by Behnes, and took his seat in a comfortable arm-chair on a revolving platform. He, too, seemed amused at the scene—and very much so when he caught sight of a small boy sitting in front of a foot almost as big as himself, with a bun on one side and a large lump of clay on the other, which he was trying to thumb into shape. I was the little boy, and the lively young man with the dark flowing locks was Charles Dickens. He came and looked over me, patted me on the head, and said some kind things; but I did not know who he was till afterwards." So says Mr. G. A. Storey. And the same genial artist takes from his pocket a sketch of "Old Weller," his first artistic effort, which eventually he discovered was the finger-post pointing to art and fame.

From art we come to music. Here sits a handsome gentleman playing, through force of habit, an imaginary tune on the table-cloth. This is Mr. Francesco Berger, the ever bright, genial, indefatigable director of the London Philharmonic, who comes to renew his early acquaintance with Charles Dickens. Indirectly he owes his living all these years in London to Dickens, for it was when studying music in Leipzig in the fifties that he made the acquaintance of the younger Charles Dickens, then living with Tauchnitz's, the booksellers, who were initiating him into the mysteries of the trade. This intimacy led to his returning to England with young Charles (for Francesco Berger was born in England), and subsequently to the introduction to the author, who invited him to compose the overtures and incidental music to the two plays, "The Lighthouse" and "The Frozen Deep." Francesco Berger also presided at the piano at the Tavistock House



MR. FRANCESCO BERGER.

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entertainments and other places. He tells us of his pleasant trip to Boulogne in 1856, where he was much with the Dickens family; of how Charles Dickens carried his baby boy on his head all the way to the fair; he tells us of the rehearsals, of Augustus Eggs's realistic acting of sea-sickness which so delighted the Queen and Prince Consort. The Dickens musical composer and performer wears in honour of his "manager" the three blue enamelled studs set in diamonds, "From C. D. to F. B., 1857." "They are as bright and fresh-looking as their wearer," I say to him. "Ah," he replies, "for brightness, sparkling like these diamonds, with a heartiness as pure as this enamel, no one ever equalled 'The Manager,' Charles Dickens."



SIR SQUIRE OBLIGES WITH A READING OF "THE CHRISTMAS CAROL."

From music we come to the stage. For, after all, Dickens was born to be a great actor; by a lucky accident he became a great author. All those who have ever heard him read admit that he was the greatest actor of his day; and it was his love for the stage that, in a measure, hastened his death. Just before his fatal seizure, when very ill, he presided on the stage at a friend's house, superintending the performance of his daughters, who were, as amateurs, taking part in the play. One of his last letters was to Miss Marie Wilton, now Lady Bancroft. It is interesting to note that the words Scrooge's nephew speaks in praise of a charitable Christmas time Sir Squire Bancroft has often and often repeated in giving the "Christmas Carol." "Though it has never put a scrap of gold or silver in my pocket, I believe that it has done me good, and *will* do me good; and I say, God bless it!" might well be applied to this talented reader of Dickens himself, for he has given his readings for charity, and, as he said to me, he has had a "kind, forgiving, charitable, pleasant time," in reading Dickens at Christmas. Apropos of this mythical dinner to Dickens he writes:—

"18, Berkeley Square,
"September 12th, 1902.

"My Dear Furniss, — Just up from the country I find your invitation, and hasten to answer it. Alas! I never knew Dickens; I just missed the privilege—one of his very last letters was written to my wife.

"All I can suggest, in reply to your kindly expressed wish, is that by my 'reading' of the 'Christmas Carol' I have had the pleasure to give fifteen thousand pounds to hospitals, and, perhaps, have done something to 'keep his memory green.'—Sincerely always, Squire Bancroft."

And after dinner I am sure Sir Squire will honour us with a reading from the "Christmas Carol."



SIR HENRY IRVING AS "BILL SIKES," 1868.

Two of my most treasured friends — everybody's friend, dear "Johnny" Toole, and our greatest and most scholarly actor, Sir Henry Irving — will come together. I wonder, as they are coming to meet Charles Dickens, will Sir Henry appear, as he did in 1868, as Bill Sikes; and will his old chum, Toole, once more don the dress and give that never-to-be-forgotten whistle in the character of the Artful Dodger? Alas! how seldom we see Dickens represented on the stage nowadays! It would be difficult to find actors at present with the right stuff in them to

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play Dickens parts. Dickens was essentially a dramatic writer. More than that, he was a fine actor, and no doubt in writing his books he selected his characters and situations more as a dramatist than as a novelist. His characters were all strongly drawn. They had to play so that the last man in the gallery heard them and saw them. In the reading world "the gallery" is represented, and it was Dickens's object to reach the bourgeois reader. To-day the actor who "plays to the gallery" is called stagey, old-fashioned, and out-of-date. To test this, find a cast to play Dickens.



MR. J. L. TOOLE AS THE "ARTFUL DODGER."

That most excellent actor, James Fernandez, has played many Dickens parts. "Aye," he said to me, "what splendid character-acting I have seen in those plays! Sam Emery and little Clarke as Squeers and Uriah Heep, Miss Harriet Coveney as Miss Squeers, and every part, no matter how small, played to the life. I recollect at the Adelphi playing Martin Chuzzlewit. On the table were 'property' books. Old ledgers of the theatre served the purpose; in the scene we opened them, and it was curious to note the takings of the theatres in the old days as compared with now. Seventy or eighty pounds was a big Boucicault success; a hundred to a hundred and twenty pounds on Saturdays." Nowadays with such a return a manager would close a theatre. But then in those days an actor and his wife playing leading parts received four pounds a week between them; now the same would demand a hundred and forty!



MR. J. C. PARKINSON.

All readers of Forster's "Life of Dickens" will remember that the novelist was rightly angry beyond control at the premature dramatizing of his stories. The worst culprit was Edward Stirling, and it is notorious that in consequence of this manufacturer of plays supplying the last act of one of his books caused Dickens to alter the ending of the novel.

Dickens was terribly in earnest in everything connected with the stage. He was really himself the first-tragedy man he refers to in "Nicholas Nickleby": "We had a first-tragedy man in our company once, who, when he played Othello, used to black himself all over. But that's feeling a part and going into it as if you meant it; it isn't usual—more's the pity."

Then I find chatting with Mr. Toole and Sir Henry their old friend, John Hollingshead, who wrote so much for Charles Dickens's "All the Year Round," before the days he turned theatrical manager and held up at the Gaiety "the sacred lamp of burlesque." John Hollingshead wrote a few years after Dickens's death, in reply to the snarlings of more modern authors, the following characteristic tribute: "When the turmoil of the present century, with all the virulence of its political debate and all the petty jealousies of its literature, shall have passed away; when those who penned the stinging epigram or the caustic satire shall be weak, or dead, or dying—dying; and anxious to give worlds to cancel many a brilliant injustice which their hasty pens have put upon record, then, and not till then, shall we arrive at a calm estimate of the value of the writings of Dickens."

Another constant

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A VERY RARE PORTRAIT OF DICKENS, TAKEN SHORTLY BEFORE HIS DEATH.
IN THE POSSESSION OF MR. J. C. PARKINSON.

contributor to Charles Dickens's magazine, Mr. J. C. Parkinson, arrives, with a highly-valued portrait of the great novelist—the only good photograph of Dickens taken in his last years, and I know of only one other of this in existence—which I here reproduce. Mr. Parkinson was not only a friend of Dickens's, but, as a quotation from his letter to him will show, a very valued contributor. It is a specimen also of Dickens's kind appreciation of those who worked for him. "In my editorship both of *Household Words* and *All the Year Round* you know very well that I have invariably offered you those subjects of political and social interest to write upon in which integrity, exactness, a remarkable power of generalizing evidence and balancing facts, and a special clearness in stating the case were indispensable on the part of the writer. My confidence in your powers has never been misplaced, and through all our literary intercourse you have never been hasty or wrong. Whatever trust you have undertaken has been so completely discharged that it has become my habit to read your proofs rather for my own edification than (as in other cases) for the detection of some slip here or there, or the more pithy presentation of the subject."

"Have you ever dined with Dickens?" I ask.

"Yes, I dined with Dickens at Tavistock House on Christmas Day, 1859 — a family party. These I remember to have been present: Chauncey Hare Townshend and his pet spaniel and Mr. Sheriff Gordon were there; Mrs. D., Senior (his mother), and also Alfred Dickens, engineer (brother), and wife, who is still alive and a great friend of mine. We played children's games in the evening, Dickens leading — 'Proverbs' and 'Yes and No.'"

Then the father of the Royal Academy, Dickens's old friend, and the favourite artist of the Dickensonia period, William Powell Frith, may honour the memory of the novelist by being present. For no pictures gave Dickens greater pleasure than Frith's "Derby Day," "The Railway Station," and "The Ramsgate Sands." I could see that great artistic success of the Victorian era resting on the arm of Mr. Marion Spielmann, the proud possessor of Frith's portrait of Charles Dickens; while the Poet Laureate of England, who is numbered among Dickens's personal acquaintances, may write an Ode for this important occasion.

With such a company I leave the details of the evening to the imagination of the reader. It is not for me to say what would be the result of such a gathering. To once more quote Charles Dickens, I feel certain my reminiscence of such an evening would be that "Every man among them hummed a Christmas tune, or had a Christmas thought, or spake below his breath to his companion of some bygone Christmas Day."

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Christmas for Three.

By Winifred Graham.

A SMALL child sat curled up on a white rug enjoying the warm glow of the big log fire. Such a luxurious little soul she looked in her velvet frock with its quaint lace collar, her feet tucked away under her supple body, her hair hanging round her face like a mane of ruddy gold.

The childish eyes, wide and wistful, doubtless saw in the bright flames pictures of wonder and delight, for was not the spirit of Christmas in the air with all its fantasy—the spirit of Christmas which bespoke mystery and charm?

So still she sat that two women conversing in low tones as the twilight gathered forgot the presence of Viva and talked unreservedly.

"Of course he will come back for Christmas," murmured Viva's aunt, a very girlish-looking young matron, who had motored over to spend the day with Mrs. Arundel.

Her sister sighed, shaking her fair head, which in the firelight appeared the exact shade of Viva's; and the sigh made the child look up from her reverie to listen attentively.

"I am afraid not. He is engrossed heart and soul in this one absorbing passion—science!"

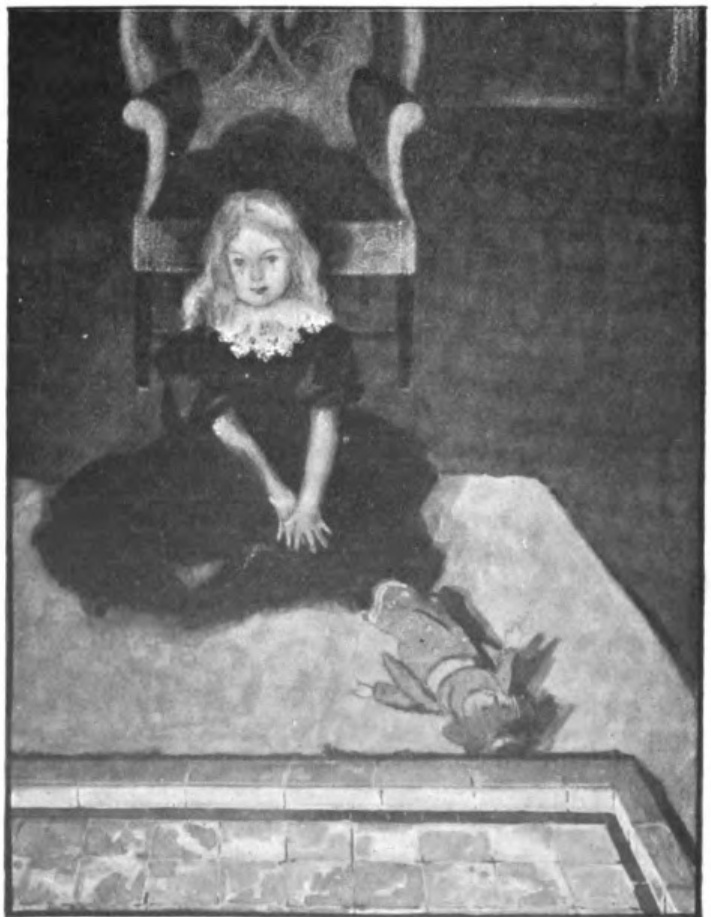
Mrs. Arundel spoke with a bitterness she usually controlled in Viva's hearing, and continued with the sound of tears in her voice, while a suspicious moisture made her eyes unnaturally bright.

"Be thankful, Carina, your husband finds no joy in the solitude of a laboratory—consider yourself lucky you have not married a man with Dudley's tastes. Only think of it: Viva and I are eclipsed by the study of chemistry, put on one side, ignored—that the world may be the wiser through a few experiments! As if the world were not quite wise enough already!"

"Why should he not work at home?" asked Carina.

"He declares we should distract him; so he built himself a bungalow at Moreton, where he buries himself month after month, and, though it is only eight miles away, as far as we are concerned he might as well be at the North Pole! I sent him just one line yesterday (he hates letters): 'Expect you home to-morrow'—nothing more. I am too proud to tell him how my heart yearns for the love and companionship of old days."

"I pass through Moreton to-night," said Carina. "I shall call on him. He ought to be told. It isn't treating you fairly."



"THE CHILDISH EYES, WIDE AND WISTFUL, DOUBTLESS SAW IN THE BRIGHT FLAMES PICTURES OF WONDER AND DELIGHT."

Carina folded her arms; there was a bright flush in her cheeks kindled by resentment. Tall, athletic, singularly determined, she looked as if she might carry out her threat.

"Please do nothing of the kind. Dudley would be furious. Ah!"

The exclamation broke from Mrs. Arundel's lips with unmistakable delight as a telegram was handed to her — a yellow envelope, which doubtless bore some kindly message of reassurance.

"He will come back for

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Christmas; he must come back for Christmas!" she inwardly told herself, though outwardly she confessed, "I am afraid not!"

The child on the hearthrug noticed her mother's fingers tremble as she read the writing. The flames leapt up with strange, almost fiendish, glee, illuminating Mrs. Arundel's haggard face. Viva fancied they laughed and crackled purposely—to accentuate the pain, the disappointment. "Not coming!"

Only two words, but Christmas brightness and Christmas cheer dwindled and vanished; only two words spoken with assumed callousness, yet they affected the whole outlook of the glad to-morrow. Viva rose and, drawing nearer, nestled closer to her mother's side. She felt at a loss for words. Aunt Carrie's remark kept ringing in her ears—"He ought to be told."

"We wanted him, didn't we, ever so much?" whispered the little voice. "I think perhaps we had better not light up the Christmas tree now; he will like to see it so much when he does come. Do you think if he knew we had fastened his present right at the top he would change his mind?"

Mrs. Arundel did not reply, but Carina suggested that Viva might go and play upstairs, evidently discerning that the child's innocent remarks were calculated to harrow rather than console her mother.

Viva slipped away gladly, for the atmosphere of the room seemed suddenly fraught with depression, and the child was keenly sensitive to influences.

It quite staggered her—the mere idea that Christmas might after all not be a time of rejoicing, and that even the merry bells which would peal from the church tower could sound a mournful note to the ears of the disappointed and lonely. The thought came as a revelation, a shock—she stretched out her baby arms and breathed hard. The realities of life pressed upon her with a weight of responsibility, the big things made themselves felt.

A woman's happiness—that was the matter at stake. She did not think of her own disappointment; all unconsciously her generous little mind dwelt only upon Mrs. Arundel's heartache and suffering.

What was this bogey her mother called "Science," which had come into their lives and rendered their home a blank? The horrid spectre meant to spoil their Christmas now, as it had spoilt so many pleasant plans already since it builded itself a house and walled her father round within a tower of solitude. Viva stood quite still in the low-roofed hall, thinking. Across the ceiling long rafters of oak gave an old-fashioned air to the building. The firelight played on carved settees and quaint furniture, while the great chimney seemed inviting Viva to shelter and forget her woes in its ingle-nook.

Though a lover of warmth and comfort, just as dogs and kittens delight in the glow of a friendly hearth, Viva shook her head at the invitation, crossing to the rattling window, which a cold wind shook freezingly—a blizzard from the north-east. The garden below looked bare and cheerless, but the child's imagination travelled back to one day last summer, and, instead of the rough voice of Boreas, she heard again the hum of bees revelling in a perfect prairie of intoxicating mignonette, and losing themselves in the delight of gillyflowers.

She remembered watching her father and mother strolling up and down the narrow, winding path through an avenue of scented bloom, while she ran at their side catching snatches of the conversation.

"The bungalow will be finished next week," he had said, cheerfully; "then I can begin my experiments in real earnest."

Mrs. Arundel, joining in his enthusiasm, talked of the happy hours he would spend in his new haunt, adding that she hoped his studies might never keep him long away, but only make the lazy leisure of their country life the sweeter when he came home.

She stood as she spoke by a great feathery bush of larkspur. Viva saw it all again—the fair, tall woman crowned by a picture hat of crimson and pink roses.

"That is the prettiest hat I have ever seen," the scientist remarked, and the words which followed sank deeply into Viva's heart—"the very prettiest hat! If my Queen Esther ever wishes to ask me a favour, be sure no man could possibly resist the charms of that wonder in millinery."

From that day, as the summer advanced, Mrs. Arundel constantly wore the favoured confection, till even the marvellous Paris roses so cunningly manufactured lost their bloom, faded in the sun, and finally expired in their bed of limp chiffon under the harmful influence of an August shower.

"The poor old hat is done for; I shall never get another he likes so well!" Esther Arundel had said to herself, as she threw the disfigured thing of beauty upon an unbeautiful heap of rubbish.

No one saw Viva, a few minutes later, carefully lift the hat beloved of her father

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"'THAT IS THE PRETTIEST HAT I HAVE EVER SEEN,' THE SCIENTIST REMARKED."

from its lowly position in the dust, consigning the crushed roses and limp straw decked in chiffon to her play-box, a large receptacle kept for her own special properties.

To the child's untrained eye the long rose-sprays were just as attractive as when Queen Esther walked among the mignonette in the lovely old herbaceous garden so full of fragrant odours, and rich with love unchilled by wintry blasts.

Now, as Viva's eyes rested on the frost-bitten grass and bare, gaunt trees, her father's words re-echoed through her brain, sounding the chords of memory, waking music in her heart.

Had he not declared emphatically no man could possibly resist the charms of that wonderful hat? Father always spoke the truth, she knew that for certain! Ever since his chance remark, the child, steeped in fairy lore, imbued the once dainty trifle with magic significance. It held, she believed, a secret power, as many an odd relic in the pages of juvenile fiction. She thought of Aladdin's lamp, of the red rose which brought fortune in war, and the love flower coveted by those whose natural charms were not sufficiently powerful to attract affection. With a leap she sprang from the window-seat upon which she was kneeling, hearing only the wild beating of her heart as she ran upstairs. Her large play-room was empty; the nursery governess being away for Christmas holidays, Viva felt delightfully free.

A great resolution took possession of her soul. She must prevent Christmas being a failure, for mother's sake! She struggled with a desire to laugh and cry at the same time, yet oddly enough she did neither. She just stood by her box of toys, very still and passive, though inwardly emotions keen, forcible, agonizing, rent her spirit.

Christmas meant so much, held such vast possibilities. Mother had told her it was a time of happy reunions, when father would be sure to come home. If the carollers sang under their windows it would only serve to remind them of his absence at this fateful time; even the thought of the big, round plum-pudding all ablaze, with the mysterious bright sixpence hidden in its luscious cavities, became a hollow mockery!

A deep, tremulous breath escaped Viva's lips as she bent down and opened her box of treasures. Two or three exceedingly stylish dolls dressed for walking, in poke bonnets and yachting caps, reposed limply upon the faded remains of Mrs. Arundel's rose-garlanded hat. With eager fingers Viva drew it to the light, and even in its decay traces of Parisian handiwork were visible. Under the lace scarf wound amongst the chiffon a handsome paste ornament in the form of a serpent

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glittered with emerald eyes. Possibly the hand of a wizard had placed it there, for the little green eyes seemed looking at Viva in a way that sent an uncanny shiver down her spine. The rose-stalks boasted large brown thorns which did not prick—another evidence of magic, and the whole appeared so redolent of charm to the child's dazzled gaze that the soft, sweet influence of summer seemed creeping into the room. Viva placed the wonderful hat on her own small head, mounting a chair to examine the effect in a mirror over the chimney-piece. She mimicked her mother's attitude as she poised the dilapidated relic on her loose mass of wavy hair. Strangely grotesque it looked, this faded masterpiece of fashion framing the childish face; but Viva's anxious heart saw no humour in the quaint vision the mirror reflected.

She only knew that attired thus she must go forth to conquer, bearing her battered helmet of finery with the dignity of absolute conviction. No queen ever wore a crown with greater faith in its invincibility, but between Viva and the kingdom to be conquered lay a vast expanse of country—eight long miles of frozen road. Night was closing in, and the cold outer air held terrors for Viva. She loved warmth and light, yet this petted child never faltered in her resolve. She just covered her eyes for one moment to blot out the vision of the night and gather her courage together, when a way of escape flashed through her mind, setting her heart beating wildly with hope, thrilling her pulses with expectation.



"WITH EAGER FINGERS VIVA DREW IT TO THE LIGHT."

The roses nodded on their frayed stems, showing the fatal wires that added to the general shabbiness of their condition. But to Viva they smiled encouragement and breathed fragrance. They were beautiful emblems of a summer's day, when the bees were busy—when the birds sang.

Carina bade her sister good-night, looking like a huge bear in her enormous motor-coat, which enveloped the slight figure from chin to toe.

"I can't bear to think of you driving back in the bitter cold!" said Mrs. Arundel, as Carina raised a thick veil for a last embrace. "But really your wraps defy the weather, and as you say the roads are in splendid condition you will be home in no time."

"I shall not forget," replied Carina, "to stop at the bungalow and drop your note in Dudley's letter-box. Just a seasonable greeting with no word of complaint! You are indeed a good wife; I should storm the citadel, and give him no peace till he came back to eat his mince-pies in the bosom of his family."

Mrs. Arundel whispered a warm Christmas wish as she disengaged herself from Carina's furry arms. She did not call Viva, for the cold night winds were blowing in at the open door and she feared the draughts. The swift car, with its brilliant lights, looked weird enough as Carina sprang into a comfortable seat, keeping her hands in a monster muff while her chauffeur drove. She nurtured hard thoughts of Dudley Arundel, and there was little "goodwill" in her heart as she contemplated his attitude towards Esther.

Meanwhile Mrs. Arundel went back to her lonely fireside, and sat like one in a dream,

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staring into the flames with eyes that were quite tearless.

She would not allow herself to review the situation ; she could not bear turning over in her mind the gradual drifting of love to the great seas of disillusion. She remembered, of course, how in the past they had welcomed the cheerful Yuletide together, when the man of science had not been above playing his part of Santa Claus with smiling good-humour, enjoying the sight of his child's happiness. Oh, cruel, torturing memory, spinning out the weary moments with threads of vivid recollection ! Esther Arundel closed her eyes, the sleepy embers mesmerized her.

Outside Jack Frost strode across the earth with chilling fingers, painting the bare boughs white and edging the ivy leaves with silver.

During the night the world was to be transformed into a veritable Christmas card, clothed in spotless array like an infant child.

On, on, across the hard white roads, Carina's racing car made sport of those long eight miles. It seemed to a little figure hiding under the back seat that the swift carriage stopped in a marvellously short time.

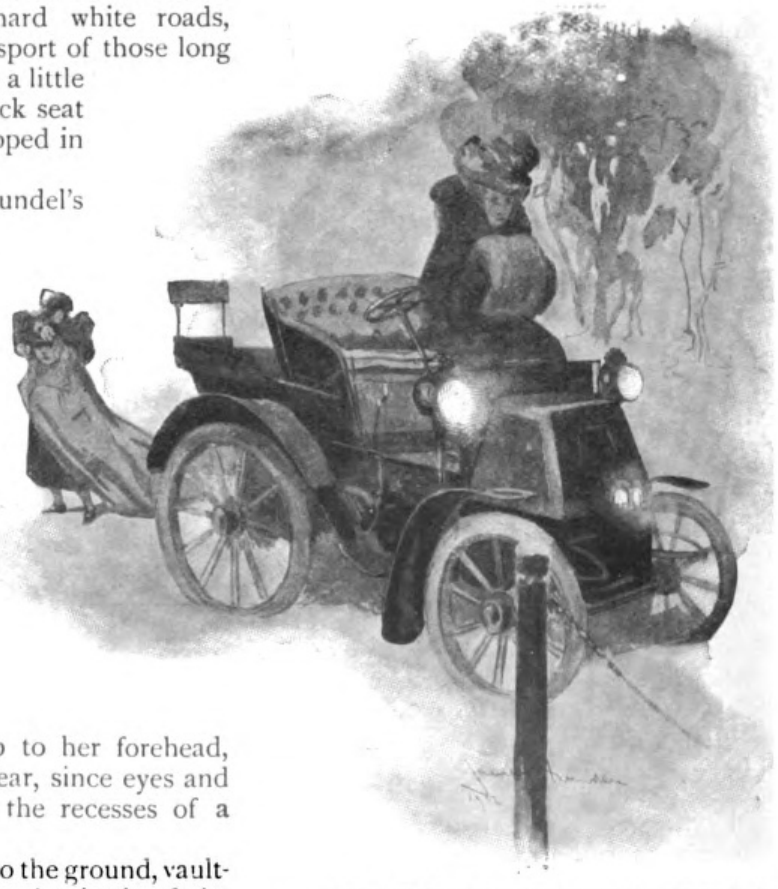
"Put this note in Mr. Arundel's letter-box," said Carina's voice to the driver, and Viva, who had almost suppressed her breathing for fear of discovery, raised her head and looked quickly round.

Now was her chance ! The chauffeur, whose vigilant eye she had carefully evaded in the stables at home, was now disappearing through the bungalow gate, and her aunt, muffled up to her forehead, was not likely to see or hear, since eyes and ears were alike buried in the recesses of a storm-collar.

Viva slipped noiselessly to the ground, vaulting over the little door at the back of the car, and quickly concealed herself under the shadow of the wall. She felt desperately frightened of the surrounding loneliness, of the darkness and space ! It was with difficulty she prevented herself crying out to Aunt Carina as once more the car agitated itself into motion. But love gave her heart courage, and love made her forget the sharp bite of Jack Frost's icy kisses. In the small body there burned a fire which defied cold and dispelled bogeys, which drove away the fancied horrors, bracing Viva to daring deeds.

She looked up at a window from which a light glowed brightly, catching the reflection of her father's figure as he moved to and fro in the room. A rush of joy at the sight sent the blood to her head. Impetuously she filled both her hands with gravel, and flung a tingling shower of stones full at the glass panes. Her signal had the desired effect, for a hand quickly unbolted the window, while a familiar voice called out : "Who's there ?"

The tone in which the question was put startled the child. Her father appeared evidently annoyed, and repeated his remark in less restrained language.



"VIVA SLIPPED NOISELESSLY TO THE GROUND"

"It's me," she replied ; "it's Viva !"

The juvenile accents, sounding so very small and thin as they reached him faintly, came as a shock to Dudley Arundel. He had been working for days and nights till his brain reeled ; toiling, with little sleep, no exercise, and scant food, to assist the human

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frame. Now, he told himself, the result of his folly was at hand, his senses were giving way, he saw visions and dreamed dreams!

Viva's voice! Impossible! His ears played him false, and his strained eyes must be conjuring up the little, shadowy form gazing towards his window.

"I want to come in—please," continued the childish treble, and it was evident her teeth were beginning to chatter with cold.

A moment later the door of the bungalow opened wide, and Viva stood facing her father with lips that trembled. He stared and stared, wonderingly, at the odd little figure-of-fun she made. To keep herself warm she had wrapped round her shoulders the small eiderdown quilt off her own bed, since she found her arms were not long enough to detach her outdoor coat from the peg upon which it hung. Crowning the quilt of varied hues she proudly wore her famous talisman, the crushed rose hat of last July, fashioned to rest on a coiffured head, to live for a few bright summer days under the kindly shade of a parasol. Poised on Viva's hanging hair and resting above the face of a child, Mrs. Arundel's discarded hat looked pitiful indeed. The very roses hung their faded heads in shame, as if regretting this cruel resurrection.

"How on earth are you here?" gasped her father, bewildered, "and why have you dressed yourself up in this extraordinary way?"

Viva dropped the quilt with a reassuring smile, and shook out the folds of her short velvet frock, sadly crumpled from the cramped position she had maintained in the car.

"The quilt isn't very pretty, I know," she said, apologetically, "but Aunt Carina told mother it did not matter how fat a person looked on a motor-car; and then, you see, I am wearing this beautiful hat because I remembered you liked it so much. Mother threw it away ages ago, only I saved it to please you. Don't you know you said if she ever wanted to ask a favour she must wear this hat, and I have come to tell you about Christmas, and the tree with the presents on it, which is waiting at home. I just want to beg you to come back."

Viva came close to his side and touched his arm. He was very cold, she noticed, as her fingers strayed down to the clenched hand hanging at his side. The fire was almost out, and the house gave Viva a chill sensation of discomfort—of dread.

"Christmas!" he murmured, looking very hard at her; "you don't mean to say we are getting near Christmas yet?" His voice had a note in it which Viva did not understand. She only saw his astonished expression, she could not read his heart. Impossible for one so young to discern the sudden revulsion of feeling working within the breast of the man, who had trained himself through study to be a mere machine. The tender touch of humanity, awakening him to the realization of all he was foregoing, kindled within him a sudden glow. A thousand ghastly imaginings had for a moment crowded his brain when Viva entered his lonely haunt. She had come to bring bad news. Esther was ill—Esther needed him—Esther might possibly be dead! Oh! horrible vision of hours wasted, of days lost, of a past that might never be retrieved. The manhood in him sprang to life like a river swelling into flood, a longing forgotten rose upon the ashes of neglect, revived by the sight of a blue-eyed, white-souled child. She had come to "tell him about Christmas," to set the deadened memories in motion, to draw him back with those tiny fingers, to make him alive again. After his long retirement he came out into the light with quivering pulses and a strange, torn sensation at his heart-strings. He had, in his absorption, lost all count of time. His extraordinary ignorance amazed Viva.

"It's Christmas Eve night," she gasped, bubbling over with information; "and to-morrow will be Christmas Day. That was why mother felt so very, very disappointed when your telegram came. You had never been away at Christmas before."

There was a world of reproach in the baby voice, and the pink roses waggled their heads mournfully. Dudley Arundel seemed stunned; the sight of the flower-bedecked hat brought Esther back in her summer glory to the fog-clouded brain—Esther in the old-world garden amongst the hollyhocks and carnations.

"Christmas Eve!" he repeated; "Christmas Eve!" He passed his hand over his forehead, and turning slowly closed and locked the door of his laboratory. Then he said again, "Christmas Eve!" He touched the crushed blossoms on Viva's head, and for a moment his fingers rested among the dishevelled chiffons with a lingering embrace.

Viva glanced up proudly conscious of his admiration. She was wearing the prettiest hat, the very prettiest hat, that had ever been seen, and the magic charm was working, for were there not tears in her father's eyes as he gazed at the enchanted chiffons? She heard him murmur once more, "Christmas Eve!"

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in a tone of wonder; and Viva smiled as he turned his back on that bogey "Science," leaving it safely locked away in the dreary, fireless room.

Mrs. Arundel woke with a start. She heard a carriage stop at the door and, peering through the window, saw a four-wheeled cab from which two figures emerged. She had just been dreaming of Dudley, and the shock of returning consciousness brought a pang of redoubled pain. The room was nearly dark, and groping her way to the door she came out into the brightly-lighted hall feeling dazzled and slightly confused. The hall, decked with boughs of holly, wore a festive air, while a great bunch of mistletoe hung from an oak rafter by a crimson cord. The old-fashioned chairs and settees, with piles of bright-coloured cushions, gave a cosy, home-like welcome; the fire blazed mightily, yellow tongues of flame leaping around the large logs of pine.

Under the mistletoe stood a pale-faced man, whose eyes kindled at sight of the woman he had so long neglected. With a cry she threw herself into his arms, while a grotesque little figure danced round in wild glee, waving the wreck of that magic sun-hat with the red roses of love, hanging now by a few frail threads to the heart of the withered chiffon.

"It's Christmas—Christmas — Christmas!" sang Viva, delightedly. "Fancy, mother, daddy said we'll order 'Christmas for three,' and he has told Santa Claus to call as usual, and we'll light the tree and the pudding; and listen! listen! the carols have come, the carols——"

She could say no more. She just paused for breath, stifled by a great wave of boundless ecstasy.

From without voices chanted of goodwill, of peace on earth, of joy and love. Within, the "Christmas for three" had begun. As Esther learned the history of her discarded hat a tender smile parted her lips, while her eyes grew moist with unspeakable gratitude.

"I thought the old thing had been thrown away long ago," she said.

"The old thing," answered Dudley, softly, "was only hidden in a dark cupboard, and it came out for Christmas to bring me a message, to speak of summer when the earth looked dead and cold."

Viva still gazed admiringly at her beloved talisman.

"Don't part with your treasure, my child," he said; "it is worth preserving, though, as far as I am concerned, it will never be wanted any more!"

"Of course I shall keep it," replied the little voice, earnestly, "and next summer mother can wear it again."

She wondered why both her parents laughed.



"WITH A CRY SHE THREW HERSELF INTO HIS ARMS."

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Ruskin and His Books.

AN INTERVIEW WITH HIS PUBLISHER.

By E. T. Cook.

HALF a century ago it was a grand thing to be a student at the Working Men's College. The college had just been founded by Frederick Denison Maurice (father of the present Major-General Sir Frederick Maurice, K.C.B.), a man whose theology may have been misty, but whose efforts in the service of man were wise and good, and who was beloved by all who came near him. The helpers whom he gathered round him at the college formed the most brilliant group of teachers ever brought together for such a purpose. Foremost among them was Ruskin, who for several years was in charge of the art classes at the college. Ruskin was at that time in close intimacy with the poet-painter, Dante Gabriel Rossetti, and he also became a master at the college. Ruskin taught landscape; Rossetti, the figure. For a time Burne-Jones also was pressed into the service. Opinions differed as to the technical quality of the teaching given by these distinguished men.



MR. GEORGE ALLEN.
From a Photo. by Emil Vieler, Bexhill.

William Bell Scott, also painter and poet, once went to the college to see Ruskin's class at work. "Everyone," he says, "was trying to put on small pieces of paper imitations by pen and ink (? pencil) of pieces of rough stick crusted with dry lichens! I came away feeling that such pretence of education was in a high degree criminal—it was intellectual murder!" But Scott at the time was a master in the South Kensington Schools, and was, perhaps, not impartial. Rossetti's own account of his class is lively. "None of your freehand drawing-books used," he wrote to a friend; "the British mind is brought to bear upon the British *mug* at once, and with results that would astonish you."

Whatever else it may have been, to attend classes conducted by Ruskin and Rossetti cannot have been dull. Among the young men who had the good fortune to be students at the Working Men's College, and the good sense to make the most of the opportunity, was Mr. George Allen, now so well known as publisher of Ruskin's works. He was one of the most regular of the students, and attracted the special attention both of Rossetti and of Ruskin. Mr. Allen entered the college in 1855, and first became associated with Mr. Ruskin in 1857. Of Rossetti, then in his prime, Mr. Allen speaks enthusiastically. He was, he says, the most lovable of men. Rossetti was one of the founders of the firm of art-decorators which, under the title of Morris and Company, was to effect a revolution in domestic art in England. Rossetti suggested that Mr. Allen should join the firm as a partner. But by this time he was already attaching himself to Ruskin, and did not care to break the connection. Ruskin had noticed his industry, discerned his sterling character, and encouraged his artistic talent.

One of the first pieces of work in which Mr. Allen was associated with Ruskin was the sorting and arranging of the Turner sketches at the National Gallery. Judicious lovers of pictures in London know well the rooms where a selection of these drawings is exhibited. (Ruskin always called the rooms "a cellar"; as a matter of fact they are on the ground floor of the building, and were once the Library and Council Room of the Royal Academy of Arts.) There are few more interesting artistic haunts in London. Here, in the desks, you may see several of Turner's loveliest colour effects, while on the walls the leaves from his sketch-books show how the painter

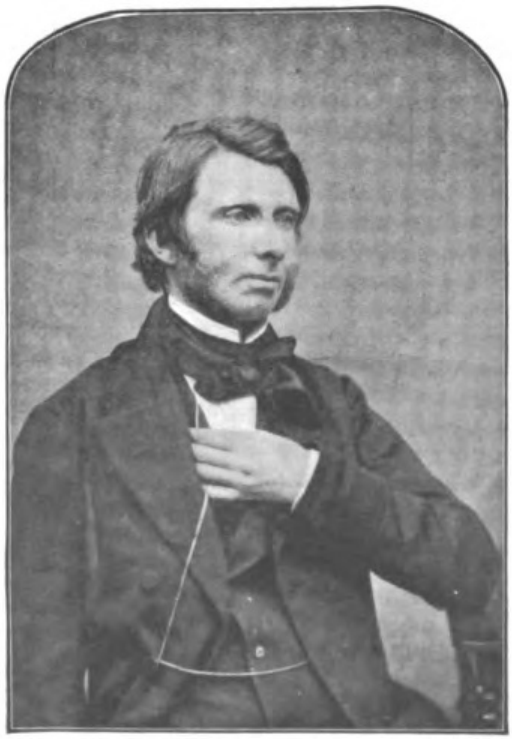
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lived for sixty years with pencil in hand. But the drawings exhibited to the public are only a small portion — about one-twentieth of those which passed into the possession of the nation under Turner's will. There were nineteen thousand pieces in all, left by the artist in blind disorder: creased, dirty, and sometimes torn. Ruskin undertook to sort, clean, arrange, and catalogue them. The work occupied him throughout the autumn and winter of 1857, "every day, all day long, and often far into the night." Stacy Marks, the R.A., who made Ruskin's acquaintance at this time, has given a description of him "surrounded by piles of sketch-books and loose drawings by the master, which he was arranging, mounting, and framing." He had two assistants in the task, and Mr. George Allen was one of them.



WILLIAM BELL SCOTT, ROSSETTI, AND RUSKIN.
From a Photo. by W. & D. Downey.

Another picked student at the Working Men's College was Mr. William Ward (afterwards an under-master there), and Ruskin encouraged them to devote themselves to the interpretation of Turner—Mr. Allen as an engraver, Mr. Ward as a copyist. Mr. Allen's skill of hand as an engraver is known to all readers of Ruskin's later books. I asked him which of his plates pleased "the master" most. "Mr. Ruskin always said," he told me, "that the feather printed in 'The Laws of Fésole' was the best thing I ever did." The drawing and the engraving are now at Sheffield. Much of Mr. Allen's work as an engraver has, however, never been published; it was done in connection with schemes which Ruskin did not complete. Chief among these was the Oxford Art School Series, for which many plates (size half imperial to serve as drawing copies) were engraved. These have never been published, but they include a varied assortment of subjects—the Etruscan cup (500 B.C.) which had its place by the Luca della Robbia altarpiece in Mr. Ruskin's study, the hippocampus, the lily of the valley leaf, the Plantagenet shields, and many other examples, from drawings made by Mr. Ruskin. Another unfulfilled scheme was the illustration of Turner's drawings in the size of the originals. Mr. Allen showed me some plates which he engraved from pencil drawings in pursuance of this scheme. Ruskin himself would pin down the drawing and trace it with his own hand on to tracing paper, for reversal on the engraved plate. This scheme, however, was never carried out, but Ruskin entered upon it with characteristic enthusiasm. Mr. Allen naturally possesses many pieces of Ruskin's handiwork. One of these, an early drawing of Fribourg, is facsimiled in our pages; in drawing, as well as in writings, Ruskin's skill was precocious. He was fifteen when this drawing was made.



From a] JOHN RUSKIN, ABOUT 1859. *[Photo.*

One day in 1862 Ruskin wrote to Mr. Allen, telling him to leave England forthwith

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and come with his wife to Geneva. The master was sick, he said, of "the London mob." Life could only be properly lived in the free air of the Alps. Mr. Allen was to join him there, where they would live quietly and happily ever afterwards. The disciple obeyed the master's call, packed up his belongings, and joined Ruskin at Geneva. Ruskin at this time was deep in political economy; his special work was to be the writing of the "Six Essays on the Elements of Political Economy," which he entitled "Munera Pulveris." Mr. Allen's special work was to be engraving Turner drawings as described above. He took out his printing-press with him, and the work went for a time well ahead. They settled first in a châlet at Mornex, which, says Ruskin's biographer, will one day perhaps become a place of pilgrimage:—

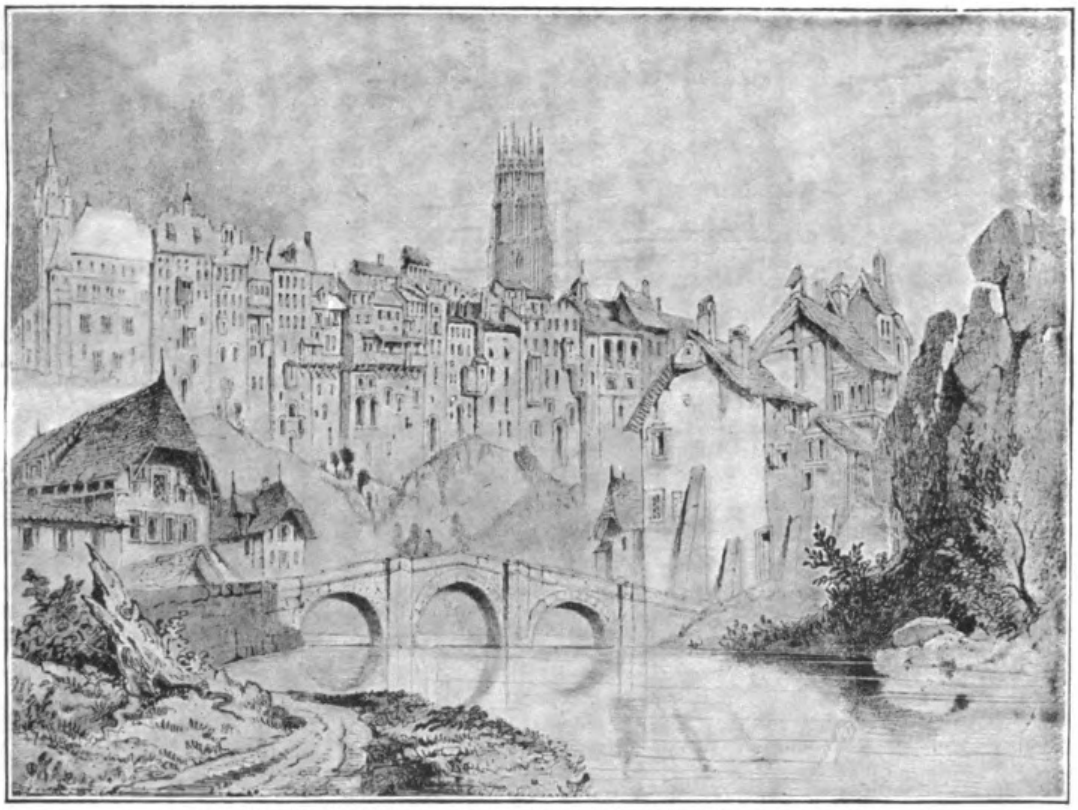
The tourist of the future, after seeing Voltaire's Fernex in the morning, will pick his way among the fields beyond Carouge, and through the gorge of Monnetier, or drive on his pilgrimage by Annemasse round the Petit Salève, to another shrine at Mornex. There, two thousand feet above sea-level, basking in the morning sun, and looking always over the broad valley of the Arve at Mont Blanc and its panorama, are country retreats of the Genevese, beneath the old mother-castle "of Savoy"; and there, with its shady little garden and rustic summer-house, is the châlet, or *cottage ornée*, where Mr. Ruskin went into hermitage and wrote his "Political Economy." You can enter now: it is a place of public entertainment; and in the cool, broad-windowed dining-room you can drink a glass to the memory.

Ruskin himself revisited the spot twenty years afterwards, and wrote a long and interesting account in a private letter to Mr. Allen:—

Hôtel des Bergues,
Friday Evening, Sept. 8th, 1882.

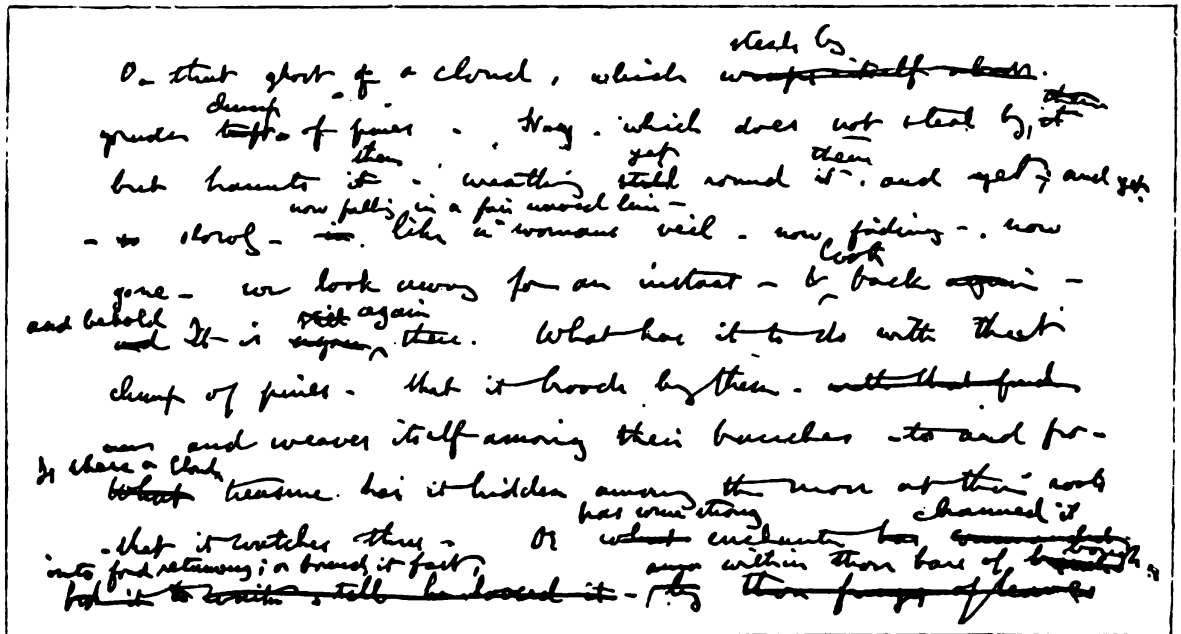
DEAR ALLEN,—I've had a glass too much Burgundy, or shouldn't have begun wrong side of paper; but the day's been hot and thundery, and I drove to the foot of the Grande Gorge before taking the Pas, and let the sun come round on it. I walked up nearly as well as ever, and got lovely views to the right towards Annecy as soon as I passed Monnetier. When I came in sight of Mornex I saw they had new-roofed my old house, and (having Mr. Collingwood and Baxter with me) was rather taken aback at finding it a flourishing hotel! I took them in and walked along the terrace to the old Pavillon without saying anything. The view was lovelier to me than ever, but there were people on the terrace having fore-noon beer! I went into the house and sat down in the salle-à-manger *under* my old room. The waitress, after taking order for bread and cheese, stared at being asked for news of the Chevaliers; but the landlord, though young, knew of them, and after being asked a few probing questions, asked in *his* turn, "Seriez-vous M. Ruskin?"

To my surprise and considerable complacency I found that English people often came up to see



A VIEW OF FRIBOURG—A DRAWING BY RUSKIN AT THE AGE OF FIFTEEN.

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[The published passage reads thus: "Or that ghost of a cloud, which steals by yonder clump of pines; nay, which does *not* steal by them, but haunts them, wreathing yet round them, and yet,— nd yet,—slowly; now falling in a fair waved line like a woman's veil; now fading, now gone; we look away for an instant, and look back, and it is again there. What has it to do with that clump of pines, that it broods by them, and weaves itself among their branches, to and fro? Has it hidden a cloudy treasure among the moss at their roots, which it watches thus? Or has some strong enchanter charmed it into fond returning, or bound it fast within those bars of bough?"]

A WELL-KNOWN PASSAGE FROM THE ORIGINAL MS. OF "MODERN PAINTERS."

where I lived, and that the landlord even knew that I always slept in the Pavillon! I asked leave to see the old room. It was turned into a bedroom, but otherwise it and its galleries unchanged.

Then I got news of Franceline. She was living with her husband in her father's house. I went up by myself, and she came running out—had seen me go down, and known me at once. She isn't improved by the twenty years' "progress," but was very glad to see me—showed me her four daughters—gave me some excellent tea and currant preserve and a bunch of white roses; listened attentively while I described Sunnyside and its business to her—and heard with reverence of my Oxford Professorship.

She sent you all manner of regards.

After saying good-bye, with some promise of coming again, I walked down to Etrembières, and drove home here from the pont; and had a lovely walk and study of the Rhone, and made a sketch of it and the old town at sunset.

As I was up the Dole yesterday—good 1,500ft. climb above the road at its highest point—I'm rather pleased to find myself as fresh as if I had done nothing, or rather fresher! having, as I said, had a glass too much Burgundy after dinner. . . . . .

—Ever yours affectionately, J. RUSKIN.

The Chevaliers were the good people in the village who used to send in Mr. Ruskin's meals.

Here, then, in 1862, Ruskin and Mr. Allen settled down, Couttet, the Alpine guide, being also of the party. For a time, too, Ruskin had with him his valet and factotum, Crawley. He was well attended, it will be seen, but not well enough for his anxious mother, who was never reconciled, Mr. Allen says, to her son being absent from her watchful care. Ruskin was a good walker, but no athlete. He and Mr. Allen were out one day upon the mountain-side. They passed a group of men engaged in rough work with pickaxes. "How I wish," said Ruskin, "I could do what those men are doing! I was never allowed to do any work which would have strengthened my back. I wasn't allowed to ride, for fear of being thrown off; nor to boat, for fear of being drowned; nor to box, because it was vulgar; I was allowed to fence, because it was genteel." But Mr. Allen cannot remember ever seeing Ruskin with the foils. Sometimes when he was living with his parents at Denmark Hill he would enjoy a surreptitious row on the river. "I used to be told," says Mr. Allen, "not to let his parents know where he was gone." Ruskin at this time was in the forties.

What a companion must Ruskin have been on mountain walks around Bonneville and Chamonix! Mr. Allen looks back, as one can well understand, to those days among the Alps as the most stimulating and interesting of his life. "Ruskin's great work," he says, "was to teach people to see. He had an eye for everything—clouds and stones, hills and flowers, all interested him in the same intense way. And what he saw and felt he communicated in inimitable and inevitable eloquence to

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others. I seem to hear him now breaking forth into a rhapsody of delight as we came unexpectedly, on a walk up the Brezon, upon a sloping bank of the star-gentian. He was full, too, of sympathy with the life of the people. I can see him now kneeling down, as he knelt on Easter Sunday, 1863, and praying with a peasant woman at a wayside chapel. 'When I first reach the Alps,' he said to me once, 'I always pray.' Mr. Ruskin's printed passages of adoration in presence of the sublimity of Nature were the expression of his inmost feelings and in accord with his own practice." Here is a characteristic letter :—

Assisi, June 8th.

MY DEAR ALLEN,—I find your letter here to-day enclosing Tyndall, etc. I have no intention of getting into controversy with him; the glacier lectures will state all the facts gravely and sternly, taking no notice of his equivocations or impertinences, and will set the men on glacier work themselves next year. . . . . .

I can't write more to-night. We can talk over all this better at Courmayeur.—Ever affectionately yours, J. R.

June 9th, Morning.

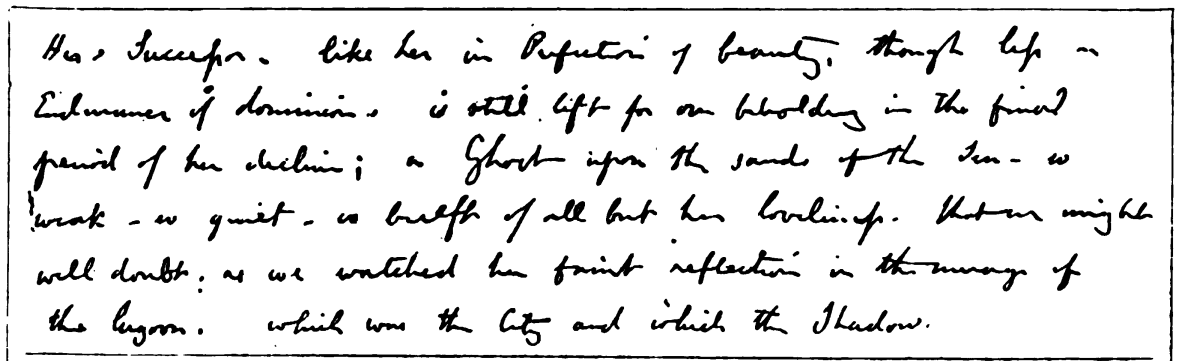
I have opened my letter to copy for you a bit of glacier lectures I've just chanced upon, which may amuse you.

Here, then, is your first group of questions: What sort of forces are—(were)—these which take—(for familiar instance in our own chalk formation)—the whole of the North Foreland, with Dover Castle on it—turn it slap upside down and put it on the top of the Parade at Margate—then sweep up Whitstable oyster beds and lay them in a heap on the top of the bottom of Dover cliffs turned upside down—and finally strew blocks of Aberdeen granite over the whole, of the average size of an omnibus? That is the sort of thing which produces the north side of the Lake of Thun, and provides after-dinner "objects of interest" for the company at the Hôtel de Bellevue.

At one time Ruskin was bent upon building himself a house in Savoy. It was to be a "hill-top" house. He had been for a solitary ramble up the Brezon, above Bonneville, and was entranced with the flowers and the view. There on the mountain summit was the place chosen for his châlet. He entered into his scheme with characteristic enthusiasm. "The hardest day's work I ever did in my life," says Mr. Allen, "was marking out the boundaries of Mr. Ruskin's intended purchase." He was resolved to buy the greater part of the mountain. There was no water; he would construct a dam to collect the snow. Dante Rossetti was to come out and design the decoration of the châlet; Burne-Jones was to paint the walls. Alas! this "house beautiful" among the mountains remained a châlet in the air. Ruskin has himself told the sequel :—

I entered into treaty with the Commune of Bonneville for the purchase of the whole top of the Brezon; but this negotiation came to nothing, because the Commune, unable to see why anybody should want to buy a waste of barren rock, with pasturage only for a few goats in the summer, concluded that I had found a gold-mine or a coal-bed in it, and raised their price on me till I left the Brezon on their hands; Osborne Gordon (Ruskin's old tutor at Christ Church) having also walked up with me to my proposed hermitage, and, with his usual sagacity, calculated the daily expense of getting anything to eat up those four thousand feet from the plain.

The good people of Bonneville were not a little disappointed. They had thought to see Ruskin permanently established among them as an earthly providence; they even on one occasion "discharged salvoes of artillery," says Mr. Allen, "in our honour. They overreached themselves; but it was a lovely spot; the Alpine rose that Mr. Ruskin loved so much was magnificent, and the flora generally very rich." Much of the geological and botanical work that Ruskin did in Savoy was afterwards used in his uncompleted works, "Deucalion" and "Proserpina," and many of Mr. Allen's engravings were also thus employed.



A PASSAGE FROM THE OPENING PAGE OF "STONES OF VENICE."

["Her successor, like her in perfection of beauty, though less in endurance of dominion, is still left for our beholding in the final period of her decline; a Ghost upon the sands of the sea, so weak—so quiet—so bereft of all but her loveliness, that we might well doubt, as we watched her faint reflection in the mirage of the lagoon, which was the City, and which the Shadow."]

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Ruskin's "hermitage" in the Alps—alleviated, it should be said, during its continuance by two or three flying visits to England—came to an end in March, 1864, owing to his father's illness and death. Mr. Allen remained in Savoy from December, 1862, till July, 1864. On returning to England he continued in various ways to assist his "master." Ruskin was very hospitable, and was always ready to show his collections at Denmark Hill—his Turners and his minerals—to friends, acquaintances, or even strangers who were really interested. But he did not care to be lion-hunted. "I am afraid," says Mr. Allen, "that visitors bent on that pursuit were often disappointed, for if Mr. Ruskin suspected anything of the kind he would employ me to take his place and show the collections." Among Ruskin's most cherished visitors at this period was Carlyle. Ruskin would send his carriage to drive Carlyle out from Chelsea, or the old man would ride over and spend the day. "No one," wrote Mrs. Carlyle, "managed Carlyle so well as Ruskin. It was quite beautiful to see him. Carlyle would say outrageous things, running counter to everything Ruskin cared for. Ruskin would treat Carlyle like a naughty child, lay his arms around him, and say, 'Now this is too bad.'" Mr. Allen remembers a characteristic little trait of Ruskin's thoughtfulness. Carlyle loved tobacco; Ruskin hated it, and his mother could not tolerate it. When a visit from Carlyle was expected, Mr. Allen would be sent up to London to buy a box of the best cigars for the "Sage of Chelsea" to carry away with him from Denmark Hill.

I asked Mr. Allen about Ruskin's Turners. "Is it true, as related by Mr. Frederic Harrison in his monograph, that Ruskin's mother was so strict a Sabbatarian as to insist on having all the Turners covered up on Sunday?" Mr. Allen said that this was a mistake. Mr. Harrison perhaps visited Denmark Hill on Sunday, and, noticing that the drawings were covered, concluded that this was a piece of Sunday observance. But the Turners were always thus covered up. Ruskin was convinced that water-colours deteriorated seriously under direct sunlight. Mr. Allen remembers some experiments made by Cozens, the engraver, which Ruskin saw, and which seemed conclusive. "There was one of his Turners," continued Mr. Allen, "which Mr. Ruskin was not proud of. He used to say to me, 'Don't show it, or, if you do, tell them it's a bad one.' This was the Rochester. 'My father gave it to me once,' said Mr. Ruskin, 'just to bring me home a fortnight earlier from abroad, and it's the worst Turner I have.' But Mr. Harrison is quite correct," said Mr. Allen, "in writing of the beautiful deference and tender affection which Mr. Ruskin ever showed to his parents. His mother's watchfulness was unfailing, but perhaps sometimes excessive. In these years Mr. Ruskin did much lecturing and other work which took him away in the evenings. His devoted nurse Anne always required to know where he was going; sat up for him till he returned, and tucked him up in bed." Two little writings by Ruskin, not generally known, may be given here. They are inscribed on the tomb of his father and mother in Shirley Churchyard, near Elmer's End, Kent:—

Here rests from day's well-sustained burden, John James Ruskin, born in Edinburgh, May 18th, 1785. He died in his home in London, March 3rd, 1864. He was an entirely honest merchant, and his memory is, to all who keep it, dear and helpful. His son, whom he loved to the uttermost and taught to speak truth, says this of him.

Here, beside my father's body, I have laid my mother's. Nor was dearer earth ever returned to earth, nor purer life recorded in Heaven. She died December 5th, 1871, aged ninety years.

A photograph of the tombstone is reproduced here, but, unfortunately, it was found impossible to show the inscription at the top, owing to the metal lettering having become almost identical in colour with the stone.



[Photo. by] THE TOMB OF RUSKIN'S FATHER AND MOTHER. [G. Newnes, Ltd.

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It was in the year of old Mrs. Ruskin's death that Mr. Allen was surprised one day in his cottage home at Keston by receiving a bulky parcel of pamphlets from Mr. Ruskin. He had been told nothing about the matter beforehand, and now was informed that he was to publish and sell the pamphlets. They turned out to be copies of the first monthly part of that wonderful miscellany which Mr. Ruskin entitled "Fors Clavigera." Thus was it that chance with the nail and hammer drove in upon Mr. George Allen, engraver, that he was henceforth to turn publisher. Ruskin had resolved to be rid of those wiles of publishers and tricks of the trade of which other authors, wrongly or rightly, are used to grumble. Sir Walter Besant's crusade, authors' societies, the net system: all these things were in 1871 still in the future. Ruskin struck out a line for himself, and resolved to try the experiment of establishing a publisher and bookseller of his own and on his own terms. The passage in which he first explained his scheme is worth citing as a curiosity in the annals of the book-world:—

> It costs me ten pounds to print a thousand copies, and five pounds more to give you a picture, and a penny off my sevenpence to send you the book; a thousand sixpences are twenty-five pounds; when you have bought a thousand "Fors" of me I shall therefore have five pounds for my trouble, and my single shopman, Mr. Allen, five pounds for his; we won't work for less, either of us. And I mean to sell all my large books, henceforward, in the same way; well printed, well bound, and at a fixed price; and the trade may charge a proper and acknowledged profit for their trouble in retailing the book. Then the public will know what they are about, and so will tradesmen. I, the first producer, answer, to the best of my power, for the quality of the book—paper, binding, eloquence, and all; the retail dealer charges what he ought to charge, openly; and if the public do not choose to give it, they can't get the book. That is what I call legitimate business.

It was on these principles that Mr. Allen was set up in the publishing trade. As might be expected, progress was slow. Ruskin's publications had now to steal their way, as it were, into the world. Booksellers showed them no favour, and they were seldom noticed in the Press. At first Ruskin only published his new books in this way. His books already in print were still issued on the usual terms by his old publishers, Messrs. Smith, Elder, and Co. But gradually he transferred the whole of his books to Mr. Allen—not without some regret at the severing of old associations, for Ruskin, like so many other distinguished authors of the time, had been on very pleasant terms with the late Mr. George Smith. "I should like much again," he wrote, "to be on terms with my old publisher, and hear him telling me nice stories over our walnuts, this Christmas, after dividing his year's spoil with me in Christmas charity." From a business point of view Ruskin had no cause to regret the change.



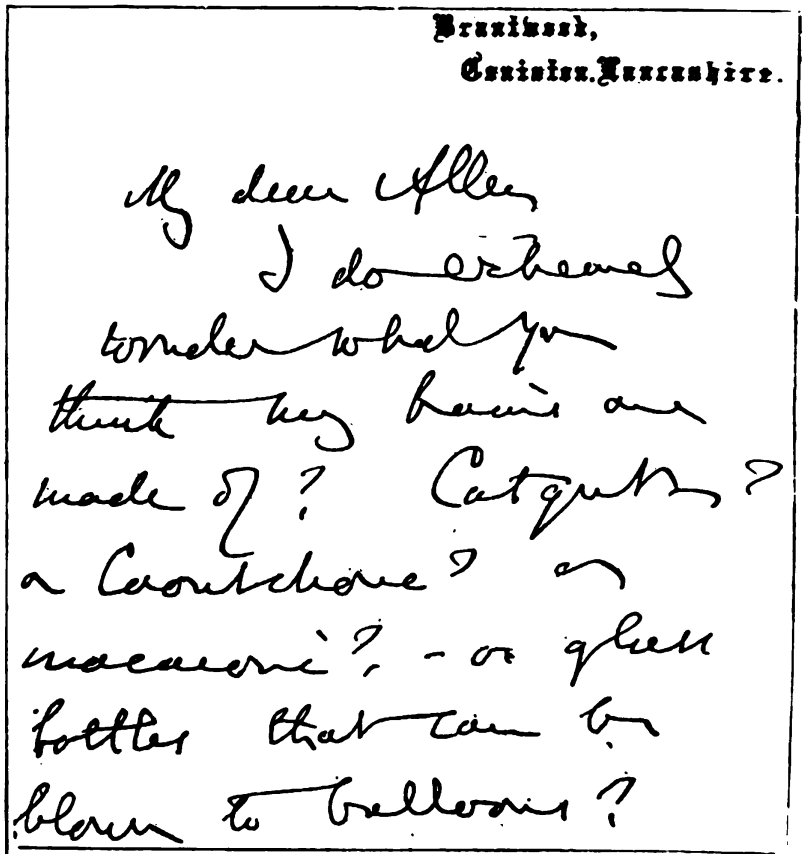
From a] "SUNNYSIDE," WHERE FOR MANY YEARS ALL RUSKIN'S BOOKS WERE PUBLISHED. *[Photo.*

It was, as we shall see, a brilliant success. His experiment was much ridiculed at the time. His idea of publishing "in the wilds of Kent" was decided as visionary; he was "mad" once more. But he lived to see his books obtain a new lease of popularity and to receive from their sale rewards which, in the case of that style of literature, were probably unprecedented.

"Mr. Ruskin has transferred his publishing," said a trade circular at the time, "to the middle of a country field." The remark was quite true. The imprint for many years was "Sunnyside, Orpington, Kent," and there

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the whole business was conducted. Visitors who sought out Sunnyside on business were often, Mr. Allen says, a good deal surprised. "They would not believe it was the right house; apologized for their mistake; explained that they wanted 'the shop,' and asked me kindly to direct them to Allen's." The mistake was natural enough, for Sunnyside is a pleasant private house, standing in its own gardens, and the warehouses which contained the stock of Ruskins might easily have passed for the more usual appurtenances of a rural residence. Ruskin himself used often to visit his publisher at home. "We used to try and get him to come and help," says Miss Allen (for the publishing was in those days a purely family and village industry), "but he said he hated parcels and didn't believe anybody really wanted to read all those books; he preferred us to go with him to the flowers and



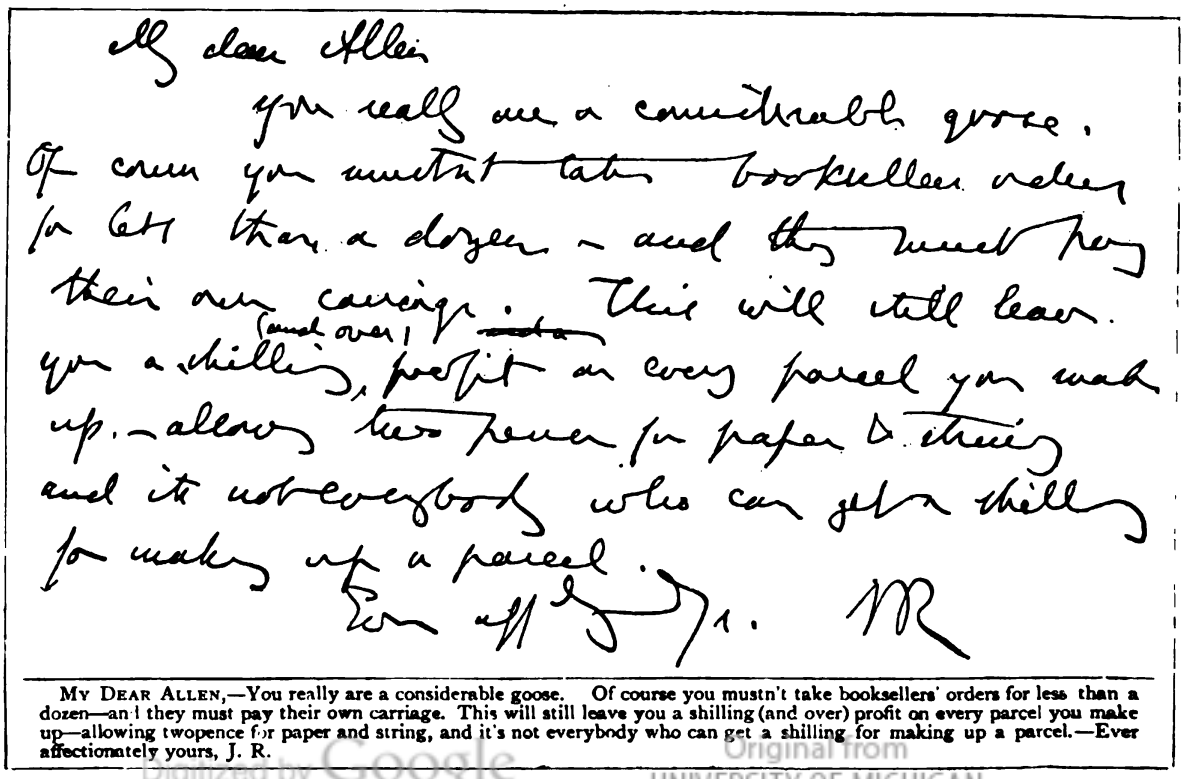
Brantwood,
Coniston, Lancashire.

My dear Allen
I do extremely
wonder what you
think my brains are
made of? Catgut?
a Caoutchouc? or
macaroni? - or glass
bottles that can be
blown to balloons?

Brantwood, Coniston, Lancashire.

MY DEAR ALLEN,—I do extremely wonder what you think my brains are made of? Catgut? or Caoutchouc? or macaroni?—or glass bottles that can be blown to balloons?

A CHARACTERISTIC LETTER FROM RUSKIN TO HIS PUBLISHER.



My dear Allen
you really are a considerable goose.
Of course you mustn't take booksellers orders
for less than a dozen - and they must pay
their own carriage. This will still leave
you a shilling (and over) profit on every parcel you make
up. - allowing twopence for paper & string
and it's not everybody who can get a shilling
for making up a parcel.
Ever affy J. R.

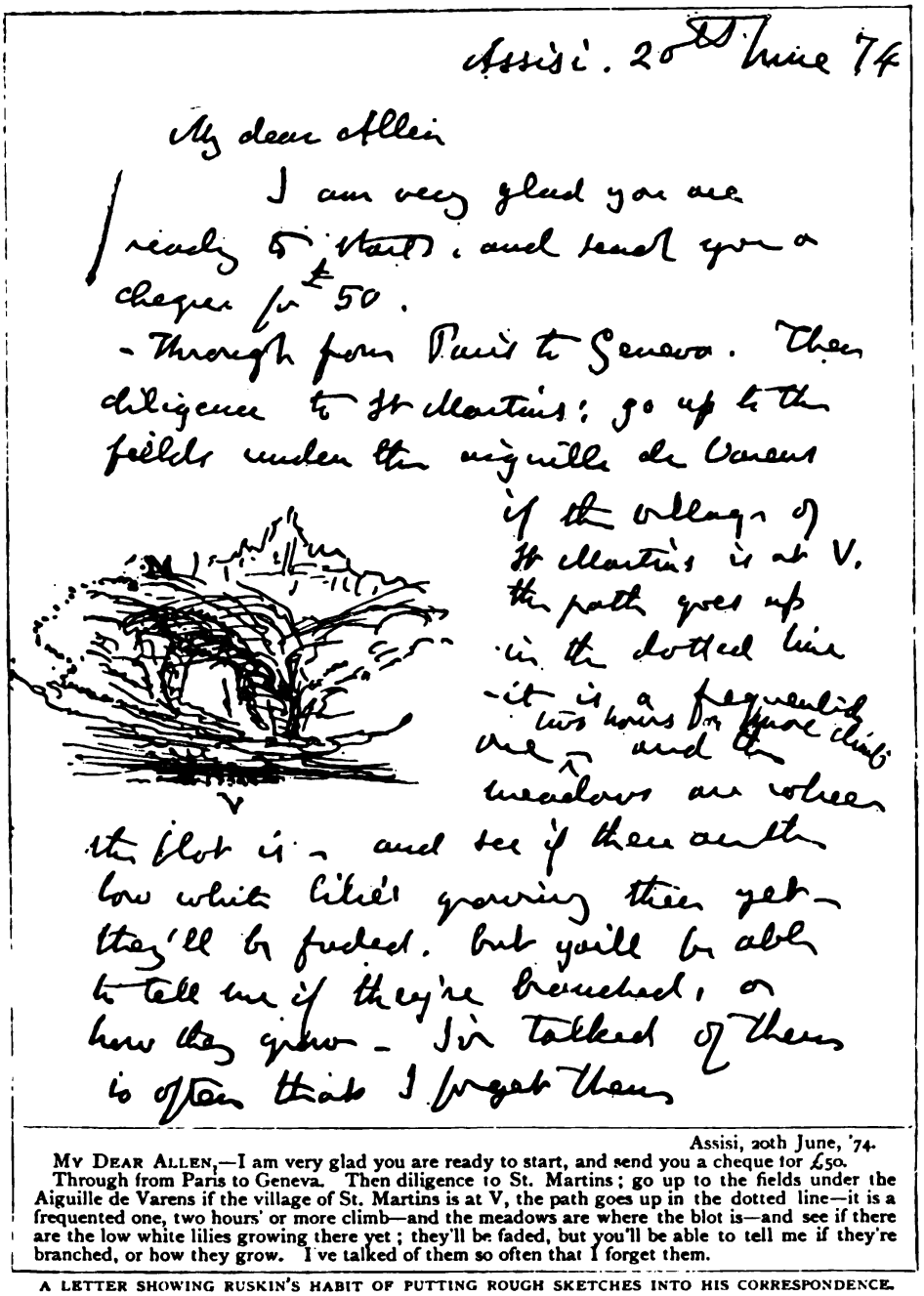
MY DEAR ALLEN,—You really are a considerable goose. Of course you mustn't take booksellers' orders for less than a dozen—and they must pay their own carriage. This will still leave you a shilling (and over) profit on every parcel you make up—allowing twopence for paper and string, and it's not everybody who can get a shilling for making up a parcel.—Ever affectionately yours, J. R.

ANOTHER CHARACTERISTIC LETTER.

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the woods." However, people did want the books—so much so that Mr. Allen was forced to open a London warehouse also: first at Bell Yard, Chancery Lane, and afterwards in the Charing Cross Road, where the business is now conducted.

The demand for Ruskin's books of all sorts has been very great during the last quarter of a century. When the business of publishing them was transferred to Mr. George Allen, early in the seventies, a list was drawn up of the stock on hand and of the time which, according to the then rate of sale, would be necessary to exhaust the stock. Of "The Stones of Venice," for instance, there were one hundred copies; it would take a year, it was thought, to exhaust them. For a hundred and two copies of "Unto this Last" two years were allowed. As a matter of fact "The Stones" were soon exhausted, and when Mr. Allen published his first new edition of that work over nine hundred copies were sold in the first half-year of issue. Of "Unto this Last" he has sold some seventy thousand copies. It may be interesting to give a list of Ruskin's cheaper books, in the order of their popularity:—



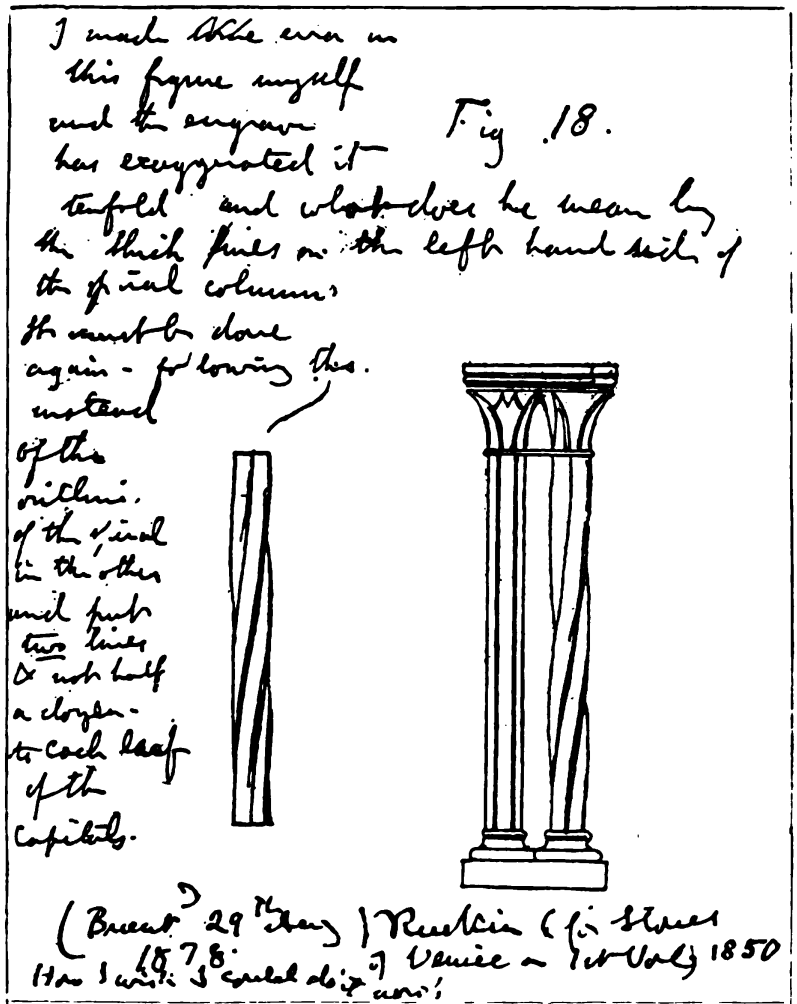
Assisi, 20th June, '74.

My Dear Allen,—I am very glad you are ready to start, and send you a cheque for £50. Through from Paris to Geneva. Then diligence to St. Martins; go up to the fields under the Aiguille de Varens if the village of St. Martins is at V, the path goes up in the dotted line—it is a frequented one, two hours' or more climb—and the meadows are where the blot is—and see if there are the low white lilies growing there yet; they'll be faded, but you'll be able to tell me if they're branched, or how they grow. I've talked of them so often that I forget them.

A LETTER SHOWING RUSKIN'S HABIT OF PUTTING ROUGH SKETCHES INTO HIS CORRESPONDENCE.

1. "Sesame and Lilies." 2. "Unto this Last." 3. "Frondes Agrestes." 4. "The Crown of Wild Olive." 5. "The King of the Golden River." 6. "The Ethics of the Dust." 7. "The Queen of the Air." 8. "Time and Tide by Weare and Tyne." 9. "The Two Paths." 10. "The Eagle's Nest."

"Sesame" is, I understand, by far the most popular, though of late "Unto this Last" has been "going very strong," as they say. Of Ruskin's greater works—the three by which his name and fame will most securely live—"The Seven Lamps of Architecture" is the most popular; it is also, we must remember, the cheapest. "Modern Painters" and "The Stones of Venice" can never, in any decent form, be very cheap, for the illustrations are an integral portion of them. Each book, since it was issued in a



["I made some error in this figure myself, and the engraver has exaggerated it tenfold; and what does he mean by the thick lines on the left-hand side of the spiral column? It must be done again, following this instead of the outline of the spiral in the other, and put *two* lines and not half-a-dozen to each leaf of the capitals."]

SKETCH AND NOTES FOR "STONES OF VENICE."

cheaper form than heretofore, has sold very largely. "Frondes Agrestes," it may be well to explain to those who do not happen to have read the book, is a selection of passages from "Modern Painters," which, in this form, has been one of the three most widely dispersed of all Ruskin's books.

Ruskin's titles are, it must be confessed, more picturesque than informing. It is impossible not to sympathize with the Scottish farmer who demanded the return of his money when he discovered that "Notes on the Construction of Sheepfolds" was a treatise upon pastoral theology. Mr. Frederic Harrison says he has never been able to unriddle why "Sesame" and why "Lilies." Well, it is not very obvious, certainly, but the meaning is there, though it has to be fetched from afar; when found, it is characteristically pretty and fanciful. "Sesame" alludes to "that old enchanted Arabian grain, the Sesame, that opens doors—doors not of robbers' caves, but of Kings' treasuries." The Kings' treasuries of which Ruskin writes are libraries of books. Our hearts and imaginations are "the Open Sesame" of a huge, obscure, endless cave, with inexhaustible treasure of pure gold scattered in it. The lecture on "Lilies," or Queens' gardens, was an impassioned exhortation to the women of England. Not as the lilies of the field, that "toil not, neither do they spin," these human lilies have their work to do, their battle to fight, that they may be counted worthy "to grow among the sesame of knightly spears," as Giotto's lilies grew among the roses. Perhaps the safest thing to conclude about any title of Ruskin's was that the contents would not correspond to the obvious meaning of it. I remember hearing a lecture in which Ruskin laughed at himself in this connection. The subject originally announced was "Crystallography," but it had subsequently been changed to "Cistercian Architecture." A certain newspaper, which I forbear to specify, remarked that "no doubt either title would do equally well."

Ruskin put his audience into good humour at the outset by referring to the remark and admitting that there was a good deal of truth in it. "For," said he, "in the proposed lecture on crystallography there would certainly have been allusions to Cistercian architecture, while it had required all his powers of self-denial to keep crystallography out of the lecture he was actually delivering. But he had not been equally successful in including Cistercian architecture." Perhaps the most truthful, if the least dignified, title for many of Ruskin's books would be "Inquire Within Upon Everything."

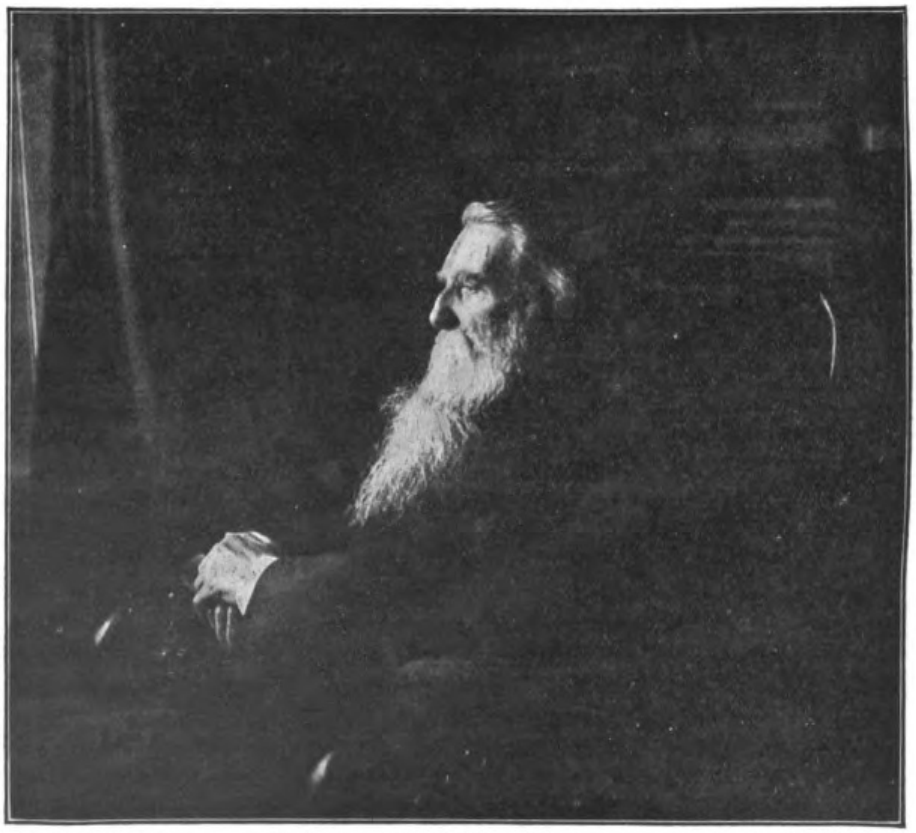
To enumerate even the titles of Ruskin's books would take pages; to specify the editions, a volume or two. At present his

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writings, as published by Mr. Allen, consist of some seventy volumes, costing about twenty-seven pounds, and even then a purchaser who desires the complete works of Ruskin must study the "Bibliography" and spend some years in "collecting." He will find that he still lacks some thirty volumes or pamphlets; some almost, if not quite, unobtainable; many obtainable only at great cost. The object of the Library Edition which Mr. Allen now has in hand is to put within reach of every collector the complete works of Ruskin. "My hope and aim," adds Mr. Allen, "is to make this edition a worthy monument of the master."

Ruskin's industry was prodigious. No literary man of the time reached anything like the same output, and all the while he was no less indefatigable as an artist than as an author. One secret of the amount of work he did was early rising. To be up with the sun was his rule of life, and much of his best literary work was done in the early morning hours, before the rest of the household was astir. I asked Mr. Allen if the master was not inclined to be a little chippy at breakfast. "By no means," was the answer. "He was always bright and cheerful then, and ready to receive his guests in good spirits." A remarkable tribute, it must be allowed, to his sweetness of disposition. Mr. Allen could say much of the infinite trouble which Ruskin took over the illustrations for his books. The collection of Ruskin manuscripts which Mr. Allen possesses shows the same thing — in their successive revisions, erasures, re-castings; but of these things we are to hear, I understand, in the Library Edition. The illustration given on the opposite page is a facsimile of a piece of one of the manuscripts of "Stones of Venice" (vol. i., fig. 18). It is a note by Ruskin for the engraver. In turning over his old MSS., Ruskin added a note to this: "How I wish I could do it now!"

That was in 1878. Mr. Allen saw Ruskin occasionally during the days, twenty years later, of his weakness, weariness, and sometimes listlessness. Mr. Allen had been talking to him once of old times—of those old times of life among the Alps, described in this article. Ruskin seemed to follow with interest, and every now and then would contribute some reminiscence of his own. Then his publisher and old friend went on to talk of his books. Ruskin held out his hand. "Poor hand!" he exclaimed, "it will never hold pen again. Well, it has got me into much trouble; perhaps it is better so." Into much trouble, it may be; but also into much honour and an abiding place in English letters.



From a Photo. by] THE LATEST PORTRAIT OF MR. RUSKIN. *[Fred Holyer.*

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The Great Sirius Diamond.

By Gilbert H. Page.

SIR NOEL WRETTON'S dinner-parties were well known among clubmen, artists, and connoisseurs, and invitations to them were much sought after. He had the hospitable, if eccentric, habit of allowing guests to invite themselves. It was done in this way. A book was kept in the hall, under the charge of the butler, Lane, an excellent servant, who had lived with the baronet over two-and-twenty years. Any man whom Sir Noel had once invited to his table was at liberty to call at Buckingham Gate in the morning and enter his name as an intending guest, either for that same evening if there were a vacancy, or for any future date on which Wretton had arranged to dine at home. Eight persons including the host himself were the limit for each night, and the plan worked admirably, free and easy as it seems. But then you must remember Sir Noel made himself thoroughly sure of his man before launching that first invitation which alone gave the *entrée* to his house.

And this house of his in James Street, Buckingham Gate, is well worth seeing, being filled with fine pictures, fine china, and curios of all sorts. Whistlers, Condors, Alfred Stevenses, and Manets hang in the little white drawing-room, where the furniture is genuine Chippendale. Four celebrated cabinets by Boule stand in the big amber drawing-room, and between them masterpieces by Watteau and Fragonard adorn the walls. Sombre brush-work by Jauser and Matthieu Marqs decorates the dining-room, and here are old Dutch oaken sideboards and cabinets for the display of a magnificent collection of sixteenth-century silver, representing the best craftsmen of the Renaissance.

Many of us, however, found Wretton's remarkable enamels, snuff-boxes, antique and modern rings, and other jewels even more interesting than his furniture and his pictures, and for me his collection of unset gems in particular was most fascinating of all.

For it is assuredly a fascinating thing, and one not to be met with every day, to see perhaps fifteen thousand pounds' worth of stones scattered loose over a table or thrown together into a pewter pint-pot, the receptacle in which Wretton kept them for choice. Apart from their immense monetary value, which always exercises a certain influence over the mind, there is the exceeding beauty of the sight, a beauty of colour, of changefulness, of brilliancy, which makes these strange products of unknown forces resemble drops of sunshine, moonshine, glittering particles of ice or fire, which makes them seem like morsels cut out from the rainbow and given tangible and concrete form.

But among all Wretton's jewels the great Sirius diamond was the largest and most beautiful, and it was more valuable also than the whole of the others put together. It looked like a miniature replica of the exquisite star after which it was named. And when, on an August night, you gazed first up at Sirius, darting blue fire into the surrounding heavens, and then down upon the diamond from which flashed blue beams, it seemed as though that mighty star, which is twenty million times farther from us than our own sun, had actually dropped down into the palm of your hand.

It was this amazing stone only which Wretton passed round to us towards the end of dinner on a certain evening when I, Capes, Laking, Henty, Baron Bülow, and Colonel Grahame were his guests.

Colonel Grahame was often to be met with at Wretton's table, but, so far as I knew, nowhere else. The other men I was well acquainted with, visiting at Capes's and Henty's houses, meeting Bülow and Laking constantly at our club. And there was much in common between us, all being art-lovers or art-patrons, while I myself was a painter.

But Colonel Grahame was among us, yet not of us. It is true he showed a certain cultivated interest in Wretton's treasures, yet had no exhaustive knowledge of any branch of them. So far as I could make out, his chief merit lay in the fact that he was a good whist-player, and Wretton had an absolute passion for whist. I used to hear them now and again talking whist-talk, and referring to past rubbers that led me to guess our host had first met the Colonel and had since often played with him at the Reform, to which Wretton belonged and I did not.

Nevertheless, the Colonel did not strike you as precisely the sort of man likely to belong to the Reform or to any other club. You wondered how he could possibly manage to pay his subscription. Though his linen was scrupulously clean it was always frayed, and he must surely have worn that identical dress-suit of his ever since his first dinner-party—perhaps half a century ago. Then the hungry look of his emaciated face and

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his meagre, stooping figure made you suspect that when he was not dining at someone else's table he was probably observing a Lenten fast.

Bülow used to whisper to me that he suspected him of many worse habits than this, but then the Baron was a jealous sort of a chap, who always resented the introduction of any new name in Wretton's dinner-book. So it prejudiced me no whit against Grahame to have Bülow insisting, in season and out, that the old man was probably not a Colonel at all, and that he was certainly no gentleman.

Once he had the ill-luck to offend the punctilious German, either by passing the salt or not passing it, by going out of the room first when he should have gone last, or *vice versâ*, and Bülow could not forgive him. But everyone else acknowledged Grahame to be a thorough gentleman, dignified and even imposing in manner, with a clear, charming, though melancholy voice, and with that other gift which is very rare among men, the gift of being a good and intelligent listener.

He was listening now with a flattering attention as Wretton discoursed on precious stones and their imitations.

"The manufacture of diamonds has reached that degree of perfection," said our host, "that only an expert can tell the false from the genuine at sight. I am going to show you an imitation of the Sirius diamond which I keep as a curiosity, and it is so extraordinarily well done that I don't suppose one of you men if you saw the two separately could possibly decide which was worth a bare five-pound note and which worth ten thousand pounds."

And all this time ten thousand pounds' worth of money, condensed behind the glittering surface of the Sirius diamond, had been going round the table passed from hand to hand, and now, when it reached Wretton again, he put it back into the waistcoat-pocket whence he had extracted it. He left it there but an instant, however. Then, apparently changing his mind, he took it out, and again sent it circulating round the table from right to left. So exceedingly beautiful was it that everyone rejoiced at having the opportunity to examine it again. At the same time Wretton sent another stone, the imitation stone of which he had spoken, circulating from left to right.

It came to me, who sat immediately on his left, first.

"By Jove!" I cried, in admiration. "It's



"'BY JOVE!' I CRIED, IN ADMIRATION. 'IT'S SPLENDID!'"

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splendid! How do they do such things? It positively looks just as good as the real one."

But Henty, who at this moment held the real diamond between finger and thumb, looked over at the imitation one lying on my flattened palm and expressed his dissent.

"No, not quite so fine a blue," said he.

"And nothing like so brilliant," declared Laking, who now took the stone from Henty, and was glancing from it to the imitation diamond, which I had passed on to Capes. Capes passed it to Bülow, but the Baron gave it a mere glance—there was just a streak of envy in his character as well as of jealousy—and finally both stones reached the Colonel at the same moment.

"Put them down close together on the cloth," suggested Wretton, "keeping the stone Laking gives you, the real stone, on the left, and the imitation, which Bülow gives you, on the right. There! Now, then, what did I tell you all? And which is really the Sirius diamond, which the sham?"

The truth was stupefying but unmistakable. The real stone was the one which Wretton had passed to me, and which I and Capes and Bülow had accepted unhesitatingly as an imitation, while the imitation stone had completely deceived Henty and Laking, who fancied that they saw in it greater brilliancy and finer colour than in the real gem. Only now, when the two stones lay side by side, did a greater depth, a greater purity, a greater fire, so to speak, distinguish the genuine one from its counterfeit. The real diamond seemed to possess a vitality of its own. Compared to it the imitation became as a mask to a living face, as a sluggish river to the sparkling sea, as a calico rose made in Paris to a fragrant English rose grown upon an English lawn.

We had all been thoroughly taken in.

"I don't see how one is ever to distinguish the real right thing at all," objected Henty. "If a man were trying to pass off on you a sham, he naturally wouldn't put a genuine diamond by its side for you to compare it with. And the perfection of that imitation one you have there is simply amazing."

"There are tests, however," said Wretton; "simple household tests as well as chemical ones."

"Yes, there's the old test of glass-cutting."

"And then, again, a genuine diamond examined through a magnifying glass shows thousands of minute flaws, doesn't it, while the spurious diamond is quite clear?"

This was Henty's contribution to the subject.

"But one hasn't, as a rule, a magnifying glass in one's waistcoat-pocket," objected Bülow.

"There are still simpler tests than those," Wretton told us. "For instance, put a drop of water, or wine, or whatever you like, on the left-hand stone, Colonel. You perceive? It at once deliquesces, eh? Now put a drop on the other, and, as you see, it retains its shape. And here's another way. Put both stones into a glass of water. Well, what do you see?"

"Oh, now there's no doubt at all as to which is which!" answered the Colonel. "One stone has lost all brilliancy, all lustre; the other burns under the water brighter than ever. Look at it, Baron," and Grahame passed the glass to Bülow, who gave it to Wretton, and so it travelled round the table, and we each looked in turn, and uttered exclamations of surprise at the deadness of the one stone and the flashing blue fires of the other.

"The two stones are exactly the same shape and size," I remarked; "they've even both got the same little flaw at the thin end. Did you have the copy made on purpose, Wretton?"

"The copy *was* made on purpose, but not for me. It has to do with the history of the Sirius diamond. I'll tell you the story."

The glass by this time had got back to the Colonel, still with the two stones lying at the bottom of it. He took them out, wiped them on his napkin, and laid them on the cloth in silence because Wretton was speaking.

"This wonderful diamond was the chance discovery of a Kaffir grubbing in the river-bed near Kimberley over eighty years ago. He sold it to an Englishman for half a bottle of rum. The Englishman, being hard up, offered it for five pounds to some Germans, who tried to beat him down to two pounds ten. As he proved obstinate, and there happened to be three of them, they promptly knocked him on the head and got the stone for nothing. Two were caught and hanged for the murder, but the third escaped to Cape Town with the gem, where he resold it to a Hamburg Jew for fifty pounds and no questions asked. The Jew sold it again for a hundred and fifty to a syndicate, and the purchasers sent it over to Antwerp to be cut. The cutting was entrusted to Van Helst, the greatest diamond-cutter in Antwerp, or, indeed, in the world, and it was only then that its immense value was ascertained. It was Van Helst who first

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called it the Sirius diamond, a name which stuck."

During this time Lane, the soft-footed and silent, had taken off the crumbs and drawn forward the dessert. While we peeled bananas and cracked nuts he was making coffee at the sideboard, which he presently brought round with liqueurs and silver boxes of cigars and cigarettes. We were sitting anyhow now, and the table was littered up with a thousand odds and ends.

"But even while it remained in Van Helst's hands its fame was so bruited abroad that all the swell mob of Europe had their fingers itching to get hold of it, and here comes in the origin of the counterfeit stone. Three dummy stones were manufactured so exactly like the real diamond that only the cleverest experts could tell them apart, and when the time came for sending the gem to its owners, who were then in London, four different messengers were dispatched by four different routes, each one carrying a stone, and the messengers themselves did not know which one among them had the real stone. If I were to relate to you the adventures which befell those four messengers I should take all night, for they were shadowed the whole time by thieves awaiting their opportunity. Two of the imitation stones got stolen, and have never been heard of since. But the third and the real gem were delivered in safety and, after innumerable vicissitudes, eventually found their way into my hands, as you see. I keep the spurious stone as a curiosity.



"'THIS IS THE IMITATION,' SAID HE, AND STILL HELD OUT HIS HAND FOR THE OTHER."

"But, come. We have talked diamonds enough. And when all's said and done the intrinsic beauty of a diamond is not so great as that of many other things in the world. The Sirius diamond does not really say as much to me as the beautiful Plimer miniature which I picked up the other day in Bristol, a delightful specimen of Andrew Plimer's best period: one of those pale, dark-haired, almond-eyed daughters of Israel whom he depicted so marvellously. Let's go up to the yellow drawing-room. I've got it there," and Wretton rose. "But first, you might pass me back those diamonds, Bülow, please."

The Colonel moved his coffee-cup and his plate, and Bülow groped among the nutshells and fruit-skins which littered the cloth.

"Here's one, anyhow," said the Baron, "though I'm hanged if I can say which."

Wretton glanced at it slightly and dropped it into his pocket.

"This is the imitation," said he, and still held out his hand for the other.

But the other was not forthcoming.

We were all standing now, and we made a thorough and systematic search. Every single thing on the table was moved twenty times. We shook our napkins, shook ourselves, examined the seats of the chairs, went under the table on hands and knees. But the great Sirius diamond could not be found.

The first five minutes or so of its loss were merely irritating. The stone was curiously mislaid, yet would, of course, turn up. But as time went on and it did not do so our

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impatience changed to misgiving. For we were all agreed that since we had last noticed the two stones lying side by side no one had been in the room save ourselves. Lane had left us after serving the liqueurs; the other servants before this. Yet the diamond had disappeared, and the horrible fear knocked, I am sure, at every heart as it did at mine, that one of us six guests might be suspected of having meddled with it. It was really a hideous situation, and we stared at one another in dismay.

"It *must* be here," said poor Wretton, who seemed more uncomfortable than any of us. "Let's look again."

So we made again the most exhaustive and exhausting examination of the whole room—just as though the diamond might have got up on its hind legs and walked off into distant corners, just as though it might have opened drawers and cabinets for the purpose of concealing itself — but all in vain. It had completely and mysteriously vanished.

As we stood tired, hot, hesitating, and dumfounded at our want of success, Bülow, who had been considering the old Colonel with sombre hostility, made a suggestion.

"It may have got into one of our pockets by mistake," said he, slowly. "Queerer things have happened before now. I think it would be pleasanter for all of us to make sure we have not unwittingly taken it. Suppose we all turn out our pockets and see, eh?"

And he began turning out his own, laying gold, silver, latchkeys, letters, handkerchief, pencil, note-book, and other trifles on the table. He took off his watch and chain, putting them beside the rest, and finally pulled his pockets inside out. He stood with the canvas pockets of his trousers protruding like ears on either side of him, and the silk pockets of his waistcoat spoiling the flat symmetry of his fine figure.

In spite of Wretton's protests there was nothing for us to do but follow the Baron's example. It wasn't pleasant, of course, but then the whole situation was so intensely unpleasant. We accordingly emptied our pockets on the table, and then, *à la* Bülow, pulled them inside out, and stood, the strangest-looking party of diners you could wish to see.

All of us, that is to say, with the exception of Colonel Grahame, who, with a pale and troubled face, remained absolutely motionless, leaning his two hands heavily on the back of his chair.



"COLONEL GRAHAME, WITH A PALE AND TROUBLED FACE, REMAINED ABSOLUTELY MOTIONLESS."

"Come, Colonel," said Laking, jocosely, "hurry up, or we shall be suspecting you next!"

The old man flushed deeply.

"Of what should you suspect me?" he asked.

"Laking is only joking," interposed Wretton, hastily.

"And all we suspect is that the stone *may* have got into a pocket unawares," said Bülow.

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"Anyhow, we've looked everywhere else and this seems the last chance. And as we've all turned our pockets out, I think you might too. It would be more satisfactory to yourself, surely?"

"No, sir!" cried the old man, angrily. "It would not! And I refuse to do so."

Stupefaction fell on the room. There was a most painful silence. Bülow was first to recover, and in his tone I could detect a cold triumph.

"You absolutely refuse to turn out your pockets?" said he.

"Yes, I do!" thundered the Colonel, "and I don't acknowledge any right on your part to make such a request."

Bülow looked round at each of us in turn with an I-told-you-so expression, and then, "Oh, right!" said he, shrugging his shoulders contemptuously; "I have no right, of course, but I should think you might do it for our satisfaction, if not your own. And for Wretton's."

"Sir Noel Wretton is far too chivalrous to ask any such thing of me!" cried the old man, hotly.

We looked compellingly at Wretton.

"I don't ask you to do it," he began, very slowly, "but——"

The Colonel violently took him up.

"And I would not do it if you did ask me! Never! Never! I'd die sooner!"

His face, always pale, grew ghastly, and his hands, clutching the chair-back, trembled so much that the heavy oak chair trembled too. His features were drawn—he suddenly looked years and years older, and he lost the conventional, well-bred air behind which men of the world conceal their souls. I realized for the first time something of his melancholy existence; a life of grinding poverty united with the terrible necessity of keeping up appearance. It made my heart ache to watch him.

When, after a minute or two, he let go the chair to move to the door, he staggered on his feet like a drunken man.

"You won't let him leave? You'll detain him, surely?" Bülow muttered at our host's elbow.

"You are going, Colonel?" asked Wretton. "Why?"

The old man turned.

"Because," he pronounced with well-simulated indignation, "I will not remain in the company of gentlemen who suspect me of being a thief."

And it was so magnificently done that we let him go.

You may be sure that after this the lost diamond was our favourite subject of conversation at Wretton's table. He himself rather avoided it, for I think he was a little ashamed of his weakness in taking no steps to convict the Colonel of its misappropriation. He was fond of insisting that there was absolutely no proof of Grahame's guilt, and that if he had refused to turn out his pockets we must put the refusal down to the touchy nature of military honour.

"My dear Wretton," Bülow would insist, "you may take it from me that the man is a sharper living by his wits. Have you never missed anything before after he has dined here? Spoons, for instance."

"Nonsense, my dear chap! You're most unfair."

"Well, I can tell you this, that on more than one occasion I have noticed the Colonel's hand coming away from his pocket with a most suspicious movement. Once, about three weeks before the disappearance of the diamond, I caught his eye at just such a moment, and I swear to you he blushed! It was because of my suspicions that I proposed the pocket test, and his very refusal of it would be sufficient proof for anyone but a Don Quixote like you."

"What's become of him?" someone asked. "Does he still go to the club, Wretton?"

"No; I've never set eyes on him since that unhappy night."

"Off to Argentina, you may be sure, where ten little blue diamonds cut out of the great Sirius and judiciously disposed of will keep him in luxury to the end of his days."

"Had he told me he needed money particularly," said Wretton, "I'd have made him a handsome allowance to stay in London, for I shall never find his equal at whist. He was a superb player."

"Ever caught him cheating?" Bülow wanted to know.

"Never," cried Wretton, warmly. "I'm perfectly sure he did not. He played for the sake of the game, and never, certainly, with the best of cards, can have made more than a couple of sovereigns a week at it. Less, probably."

"Yet I expect that was all he had to live on," said I. "That and his dinners here, while his old dress-suit and his infinitely well-bred manner were his entire stock-in-trade."

"And he's turned them both to good account," declared Bülow. "For if the great Sirius diamond wasn't in that old dress-suit of his when his stupendous injured-

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innocence manner got him out of this house, you may write me down any sort of an ass you please."

On which Fortune, freakiest of goddesses, took the Baron at his word.

For Lane, sweeping off the crumbs, swept an empty nutshell right into his waistcoat-pocket, which habitually hung bulging slightly forward. He put in a thumb and finger to extract it, and extracted instead—the Sirius diamond!



"THE SIRIUS DIAMOND!"

"Well, I'm dommed!" said Lane, and this breach of servitorial etiquette was, under the circumstances, surely to be forgiven him.

There was no need to ask how the thing had happened. We had just been given a practical and convincing illustration with the nutshell. The diamond, caught in the bristles of the brush, had evidently been jerked into the waistcoat-pocket, which gaped for it just at a level with the table. And there it had lain ever since.

Our delight at this elucidation of a mystery which had promised to torment our declining years was damped only by remorse for our unfounded suspicions of the Colonel.

Bülow, however, sought relief in self-justification.

"Since he hadn't taken the diamond, why the dickens couldn't he turn out his pockets?"

And none of us could find any sufficient reason why Grahame should not have done so.

But what Wretton wanted to find even more was his address.

"He's been badly treated by us in our thoughts at least, and he's an old man and a lonely man, and evidently very sensitive and proud. Although conscious of his own innocence, he must have known, too, that his conduct led us to fear that he was not. Think of the horrible mortification he must suffer, feeling that we fellows believe him guilty of a mean theft. Why, it's enough to break his heart and his spirit and make him chuck up the sponge at once. Do help me, some of you, to discover his diggings."

But, instead of giving Noel any help, I was devoured by a childish anxiety to discover the Colonel's reason for refusing to empty his pockets.

"Do you suppose he had white mice in them?" I said to Wretton, whom I happened to run across in the Park the next day. I insisted on our sitting down on chairs under a tree to thrash the knotty question out anew. "Or silkworms?"

"That's a pretty child," returned Wretton, calling my attention to a young girl who was passing us, carrying a big parcel. "Dressmaker's improver, I suppose, taking home the work. How refined she looks, but how delicate!"

But I stuck tenaciously to our muttons.

"Perhaps he had his worsted ball, needles, and knitting in his pocket and was ashamed to produce them?"

"Or his powder-puff and hand-mirror? Just as likely, I should think," said Wretton, humouring me.

"I tell you what," cried I, joyfully, "I have it! There was nothing whatever in his pockets, not even a pocket-handkerchief, and he was naturally reluctant to lay bare to us such nudity. But what's happening to your nice child, Wretton? Look there!"

From where we sat we could follow for a considerable distance the somewhat lonely path the young girl had taken, walking

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lightly on courageous little feet, and changing her bulky brown-paper parcel first to one arm and then to the other. Now we saw her accosted by a rough sort of fellow, who stopped in the centre of the path apparently to beg, while she moved on one side to avoid him and continue her way.

But he, dodging in front of her again, raised a raucous voice—we could hear the tones, though not the words—and suddenly snatched the parcel from her grasp. With a little cry she tried to take it back, but he letting fly at her with his cowardly fist, caught her on the shoulder and knocked her to the ground. In another second he was scampering away over the grass.

By this time, however, Wretton and I were on our feet running to her aid.

"Chase that brute!" Wretton cried to me; "I'll look after the child!"

Accordingly, I too went scampering over the grass, leaping railings and shouting "Stop thief!" lustily.

So soon as he realized that he was being pursued my brave hooligan dropped the bundle which impeded his swiftness and was off like a hare. With the start he had of me I could not run him down, and it vexed me to see he had every chance of escape, for it was the dusk of an October afternoon and there were very few people about. However, there lay the bundle, burst open from its fall, and that, at least, I could restore to its owner.

The contents fell out as I tried to lift the torn covering, and proved to be the three parts of a dress-suit—swallow-tail coat, waistcoat, and trousers. It was a very old suit, as I could not help noticing by the rubbed seams and frayed linings.

When I came up to the young girl I found her very white and trembling, standing at Wretton's side, while he supported her by a hand under her elbow.

"Now, you're not going to faint, I hope?" he pleaded to her, "for I don't happen to have any burnt feathers or sal volatile in my pockets."

She shook her head and smiled a little, but her beautiful dark eyes were brimming with tears—tears large and limpid as any diamond in Wretton's collection. She was a very pretty child, about fifteen or sixteen, but her lips were too pale, her eyes were too big, and she was altogether too thin.



"'HAVE YOU GOT FAR TO GO WITH THESE THINGS?' SAID I."

"Have you got far to go with these things?" said I, vainly trying to wrap the suit up again in the fragments of paper.

For a moment she turned a rosy red.

"I am going to Brompton with them," she murmured.

"Is that your home?"

"No. I live in Notting Hill."

"Come," said Wretton, "you're too upset to get to Brompton and back this evening. Is your errand very important?"

"I must go somewhere with them," she murmured, confusedly. "Poor grandpapa is so ill, and I am ashamed to go anywhere near our lodgings. Besides, I know they will take them there—where I am going—they have taken them before."

We understood.

"Your grandfather's things?" asked Wretton.

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She nodded her head.

"How much do you expect to get on them?"

She answered so low we could hardly hear her, but it sounded like "Five shillings."

"And do you need that money very urgently to night?"

"I want to get food for grandfather—wine and jelly. He is very ill; he has had nothing, nothing——"

She broke into a wail, and this time would have fainted outright had not Wretton caught her. It seemed to me likely that she herself had had nothing to eat that day.

"Look here, we've got to see this through," Wretton said to me. "Where's the nearest cab-rank?"

We were not far from the Serpentine Road, and so, supporting her one on either side, we set out to strike it. But the nearest was far enough, so we determined to make for the road which traverses the Park, on the chance of picking up a stray vehicle.

Here we were fortunate enough to find a growler cab crawling homewards, and, as most cabmen appear to live in the purlieus of Notting Hill, the driver accepted us as fares with alacrity. For by this time the young girl had given us her name—Violet Lang—and her address at a certain number in Lancaster Road.

On the way thither Wretton stopped at various shops—at a confectioner's, where he bought jellies and cakes and chocolates; at a grocer's, where he bought a bottle of port and a bottle of champagne; and at a provision shop, where he invested in enough cold meats to feed a school.

Violet Lang protested feebly, but was too weak to say much. She leaned back in her corner of the cab, her eyes closed, with long, dark lashes curling upwards from a white cheek, and now and then brushed away a tear with poor, badly-gloved little hands.

Lancaster Road proved to be a road of small houses, which became smaller and poorer the farther north we drove. At the very northernmost end we drew up at an indescribably forlorn and shabby door.

The young girl opened this with a latch-key, and, the cabman being dismissed, Wretton and I, carrying the wine and other things, stumbled after her up a flight of pitch-dark and rickety stairs.

She led us into a front room dimly illumined by the reflection of the gas-lamp in the street below, and left us alone while she passed through a door communicating with the room behind. We looked about us and saw walls stripped of all decoration, a curtainless window, a carpetless floor, and a miserable little bed on which the poor child herself evidently slept. Meanwhile we could hear her low and rapid utterance as she related her adventure to someone within.

"Ask them to come here, that I may thank them for their goodness to you."

We stepped forward.

"But it is so dark, Violet, I cannot see them."

"I will light the lamp, grandfather."

There was the blue splutter of a match, and we watched the girl lighting one of those cheap little glass lamps over which she placed an opaline shade. In a moment the flame was sufficiently bright for us to see clearly the old man lying in the bed, and it was with the mixture of many sentiments that we recognised him to be—— Colonel Grahame!

"Oh, my poor friend!" cried Wretton, "is it you? Why in the name of Heaven did you not let me know you were ill, so that I might have come to see you before now?"

"And your diamond, Sir Noel?" asked the old man, sombrely. "Do you still believe I took it?" He glanced ironically round the poor room. "You see further evidences here, perhaps, of my guilt?"

Wretton, sitting by the bedside and pressing the Colonel's hand between his own, hastened to tell him the curious tale.

"And, believe me, I never suspected you! I suspected no one. The loss was inexplicable, and I did not attempt to explain it."

"But everyone else suspected me," said Grahame, and looked pointedly at me.

"Well, confound it all, sir," I retorted, bluntly, "why would you not turn out your pockets like the rest of us?"

He paused a long moment, and my excitement was intense. Was it going to be silkworms, white mice, knitting, or the powder-puff? Then he said, simply, "I decline to say," and turned his face from us to the wall.

I could have shaken him in my exasperation.

But his little granddaughter, who had followed the conversation with keen intelligence, now sprang forward, a pink spot glowing on either cheek, which made her absolutely beautiful.

"Grandfather! Yes, I must, I will tell them! It was because we were so poor and I was often without food that grandfather, when he dined out, would slip part of his

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own portion into his pockets so as to bring something home to me. The last night he dined with you he brought me home plenty of bread and an apple and some nuts, and so I lived well all the next day. But ever since then he himself has never been the same, and now I begin to understand the reason. He has been fretting evidently about the loss of your diamond, and this has made him ill, and so he has not been able to go out among his friends or to his club any more. And when he cannot play whist he cannot earn any money, and I can earn none, and one by one I've pawned every thing we possess, until at last nothing was left but grandfather's dress-suit, and, as you know, I was about to pawn that. Dear grandfather! Don't be angry with me! I had to tell them, for I could not bear these friends of yours to think there was any disgraceful reason for your not turning out your pockets when the others did. Now they know why."

"Yes," said the old man, bitterly, "they know, despite all my brave words, that, although I had not stolen diamonds, I had stolen—bread!"

But a glass of the champagne, opportunely uncorked by Wretton, made the poor old man take a more lenient view of his past conduct and ours.

Five minutes later the provisions were unpacked, and the four of us were having the friendliest little picnic party in the world.



"EVER SINCE THEN HE HIMSELF HAS NEVER BEEN THE SAME, AND NOW I BEGIN TO UNDERSTAND THE REASON."

Years have gone by since that day and the Colonel has gone to his rest. But when I dine, as I often do, with Sir Noel and Lady Wretton, and watch that young woman, beautiful, smiling, friendly, as she dispenses hospitality at her husband's table, I always recall the first impromptu meal I had with her, served upon the bottom of an old packing-case by her grandfather's bedside, while Wretton invariably clinches my reminiscences by declaring it to have been the most fortunate day of his life.

At which Violet's dark eyes sparkle with pleasure and seem to me even more lovely than the great Sirius diamond shining star-like above them in her dark hair.

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A Hundred Years Ago--1802.

By Alfred Whitman.

With Illustrations from Old Prints.

AS in 1902 so in 1802, the minds of the people turned from thoughts of war to the blessings of peace. The year to be reviewed forms the halting time between two periods of strife; and although there are no epoch-making battles or feats of arms to be recorded, this temporary lull between the storms affords an opportunity of noticing matters of interest that in the roar and bustle of war escape attention.

The preliminaries of peace had been settled towards the end of the previous year; but the signing of the treaty at Amiens hung fire and was not effected until four o'clock on the afternoon of Saturday, March 27th; and on the following Monday night London burst forth in a blaze of impromptu illuminations. "Towards eleven o'clock a mob collected at Ludgate Hill, and pursued their route along the Strand to Charing Cross, knocking at the people's doors as they passed, compelling them to put up lights. Several houses in the streets leading from the Strand to the waterside had their windows broke in consequence of not being prepared with lights." The bill for candles was estimated at £17,000.

But this display was premature, and the people had to wait until the treaty was ratified by the Powers before giving vent officially to their feelings. The King's messenger arrived in London with the document on Sunday night, April 25th, having crossed over to Dover in an open boat. The following Thursday was the day authorized for the proclamation of peace and the illuminations. The joyful news was read at St. James's Palace at noon, and then the procession moved off towards the City, stopping on the way at Charing Cross, Temple Bar, Chancery Lane, and Wood Street, Cheapside, to re-read the document, and our first illustration shows the scene of the final reading at the Royal Exchange, after which the procession passed round Aldgate Pump. "Volunteers added to the splendour of the ceremony, and the acclamations of joy were general from many thousands of spectators who filled the streets through which the procession passed." Unfortunately, a scaffold at the Mansion House gave way, and a brother-in-law of the Lord Mayor was among the victims.



PROCLAMATION OF PEACE AT THE ROYAL EXCHANGE, LONDON, APRIL 29, 1802.

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THE ILLUMINATIONS AT THE FRENCH AMBASSADOR'S HOUSE, APRIL 29, 1802.

With the night came the grand illuminations all over the Metropolis, but we must confine our attention to the house of M. Otto, the French Ambassador, in Portman Square, which is seen in the above illustration. A party of Horse Guards was on duty to keep order, and the *Times* records that "Soon after eight o'clock Portman Square was so completely jammed with people and carriages that it was very difficult to get either in or out. Many carriages were stationary more than three hours, and all the avenues to it were blocked up. The effect of the illuminations was brilliant beyond conception, the whole front of the house being one blaze of light. The whole was very creditable to M. Otto and to the magnificence of his Government, which directed the expense of it. The music of the band (of the Coldstream Regiment) played martial airs during the whole evening."

In connection with this settlement of peace it is amusing to notice that on the return of the troops "the Duke of York ordered a pound of meat and a pot of beer to each of the privates."

The income-tax having been imposed for the prosecution of this war, as soon as peace was secured (even before it was proclaimed) the tax was abolished (April 5th), to the great satisfaction of the tax-paying public. Unfortunately, no similar repeal can be found among the records of Parliament for the year 1902.

It has been recalled that the year 1802 saw the introduction of trousers as an article of apparel among well-to-do people, though sailors had worn a garment of this description at the end of the preceding century. We therefore reproduce one of the earliest prints showing the innovation. It depicts Colonel Duff, a swaggering pioneer of fashion. One item might even have been taken from a ladies' paper of yesterday: "London Fashions. February 10th. Small watches are worn by a few dashing belles on their bosoms, not bigger than the round of a half-guinea."

During the summer there was quite a rush of English visitors to



THE INTRODUCTION OF TROUSERS.

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the French capital, of people who had been deprived of the "grand tour" during the time of hostilities; and, besides politicians, people of rank and fashion and artists flocked to the Paris museums and theatres and other places of amusement. Among the artists who visited the Louvre to see the treasures Bonaparte had just annexed (including the famous Venus of Milo) were Turner, Hoppner, and Fuseli. Speaking of artists reminds us that Turner and John Soane were elected R.A.'s in February; Northcote was attacked and robbed on Primrose Hill in October; Bartolozzi, the engraver, quitted England for Lisbon in November; and George Romney died at the end of the same month.



DR. JENNER, TO WHOM THE HOUSE VOTED £10,000, JUNE 2, 1802.

The fashion of visiting the Continent naturally suggests the cost of travelling. The charge for posting was from 1s. to 1s. 3d. per mile; the passage from Dover to Calais cost 5 guineas—a charge that, owing to competition, was reduced to 1½ guineas in April, and later to 1 guinea; and the fee for a passport signed by the Foreign Secretary was £2 2s. 6d., plus 2s. for stamps. So before reaching foreign soil a fairly heavy demand was made upon the purse.

The recent epidemic of small-pox had its counterpart a hundred years ago, when it was calculated that no fewer than 45,000 persons annually fell victims to the disease in the United Kingdom. On June 2nd the House of Commons voted Dr. Jenner the sum of £10,000 in acknowledgment of his recently discovered preventive, an amount which, but for a minority of three, would have been doubled. We reproduce the finest portrait of Dr. Jenner which exists. On the same day the House voted £1,200 to Mr. Greathead, of Shields, for his invention of the life-boat, a boat which did beneficent service in rescuing people during a storm off Whitby on December 6th.

Among other inventions of the year the following may be noted. The *Falmouth Packet* informs us that "A method has lately been tried at Camborne, in the county of Cornwall, that seems to promise success. A carriage has been constructed containing a small steam-engine, the force of which was found sufficient, upon trial, to impel the carriage, containing several persons, against a hill of considerable steepness, at the rate of four miles in an hour. Upon a level road it ran at the rate of eight or nine miles an hour." On September 23rd, at Ranelagh Gardens, a mechanic named Todd experimented in a large tank of water with a diving dress, which was surmounted with a wooden helmet, into which were fitted fir-wood tubes for the admission of air. Was this the first attempt at such an apparatus? And one other invention deserves special prominence, as it seems to have been the forerunner of the modern flash-light advertisement. The *Times*, May 1: "Among the curiosities exhibited on Thursday evening in honour of the peace was a transparent telegraph, at the back of St. Clement's (Strand), which changed its letters in very quick succession, making the words 'This may be read by night and by day.'"

On June 29th the King went in state to the House of Lords and dissolved Parliament; and then ensued the turmoil of a General Election. A week before this Mr. Dundas, a supporter of the Government, "set off for the North to regulate thirty-eight of the elections out of forty-five." Though the usual excitement, with its attendant demonstrations and riots, took place, nothing

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appears to have occurred to call for very special note. The borough polls were open seven days, and votes were received for the county members during fourteen days. The hustings were erected as usual at Covent Garden for the Westminster election, which a newspaper on the losing side denounced as a "ridiculous farce, got up by the neighbouring publicans to put money in their pockets." Fox headed the poll, and, as soon as the result was declared, the people, considering the hustings public property for souvenirs, "tore away the timber which supported the roof, and the whole fabric fell upon the unthinking labourers."

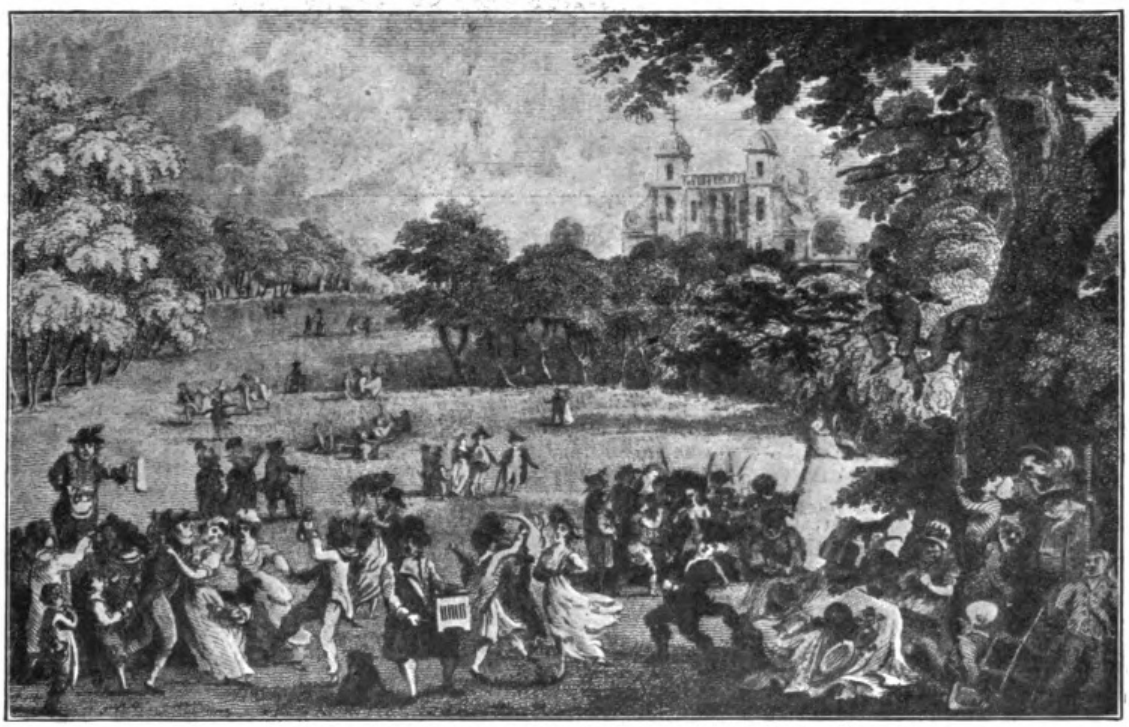
As an indication of the cost of elections at the time we note that the *Times* says: "We have reason to believe that £50,000 will not defray the expenses of the Kent election." The new Parliament met in November, and when the King went in state to the House of Lords on the 23rd, "notwithstanding the violence of the rain, a vast concourse of people were assembled in St. James's Park."

Whit-Monday fell on June 7th, and we reproduce an engraving which shows very clearly that recreation was the chief thought of that day even a hundred years ago, and indicates how the pastimes indulged in by the people differed little from those of to-day. The view may be taken as accurate, for it was drawn on the spot by a Royal Academician. A popular ballad of the day on the subject of these Greenwich gambols commences:—

> The glorious sun now rises gay,
> Promise of a brilliant day.
> Leave your toils and cares for one day,
> Greenwich hoy! 'tis Whitsun Monday.

With Greenwich, London comes into mind, and we recall the rhyme of an enthusiast of the Metropolis, who said:—

> I hate the brook that murmurs at my feet;
> Give me a kennel in St. James's Street;
> And if in sultry days we pant for air,
> Give me the breezes of St. James's Square.

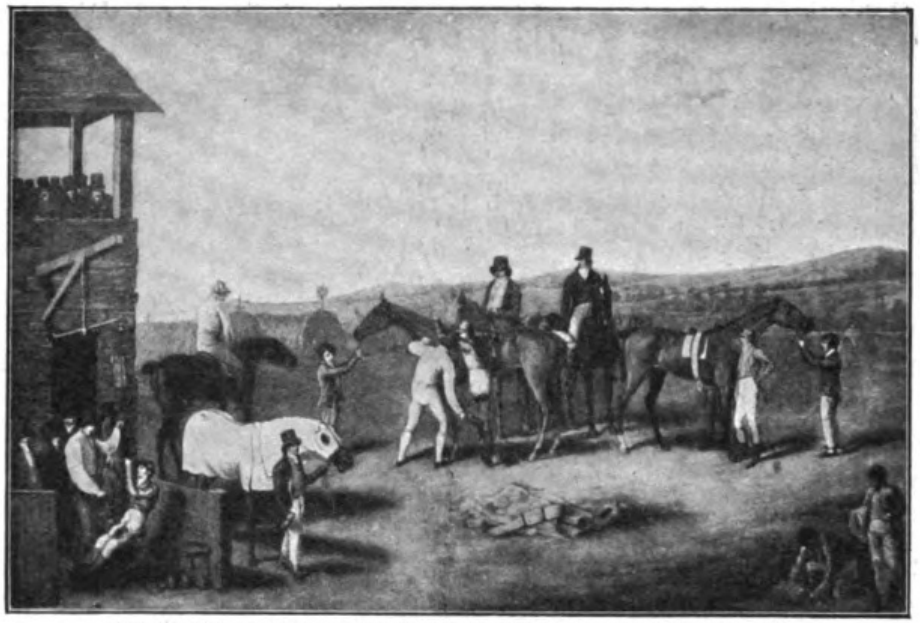


A VIEW OF GREENWICH PARK ON WHITSUN MONDAY, JUNE 7, 1802.

The streets and squares of the town were by no means perfect, and the constant depredations of highwaymen and footpads in even the best quarters were anything but reassuring to nervous people. "If there is not an additional strength added to the police we must be under the necessity of shutting ourselves up at home in the evening and converting our houses into garrisons," writes one; while another complains that "the lamps in Piccadilly, by the side of the Park, as well as those along the King's Road, Chelsea, are most shamefully neglected, as by far the greater part are extinguished before eight o'clock."

Apropos of the present uneasiness as to protection from fire, it is interesting to note that at a conflagration in Rotherhithe in August, 1802, "several fire-engines were on the spot *in less than an hour*, and the Thames

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BEFORE THE START FOR THE OXFORD HUNTERS' STAKES, AUGUST 4, 1802.

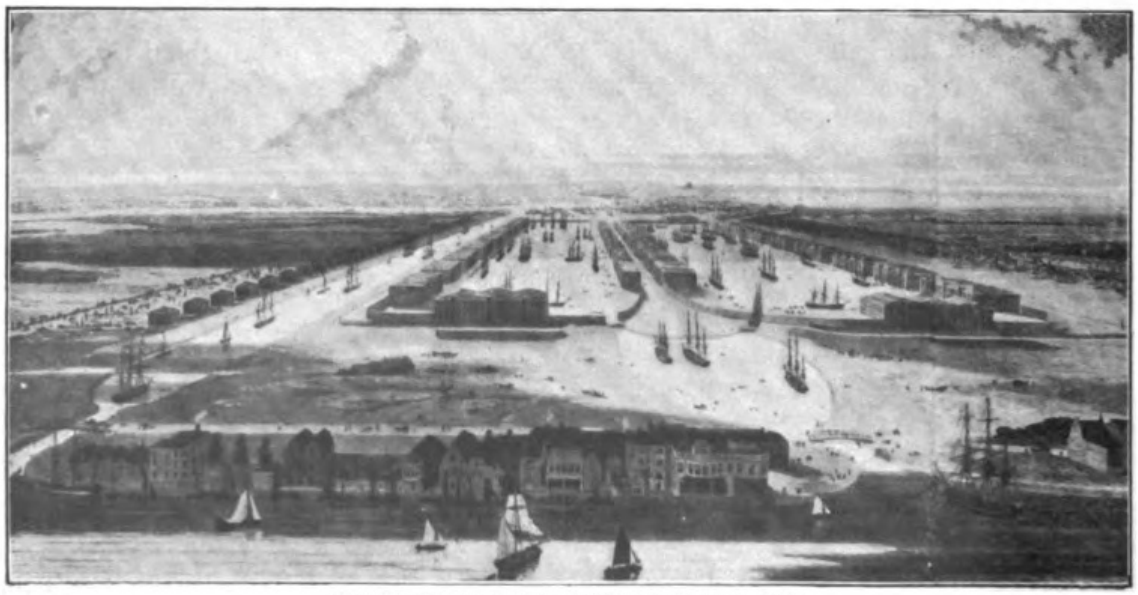
Police floating engine was brought down to supply water."

From two miscellaneous items we learn that the British troops in Egypt were subscribing to form a fund "to bring Cleopatra's Needle to their own country," and the charge for viewing Westminster Abbey was 1s. 6d., "exclusive of the money demanded by the person who shows it."

The above illustration gives the preparations for the start for the Hunters' Stakes at Oxford on August 4th; and among sporting items of the year we note that the Prince of Wales was present at the Derby on June 3rd, which was won by Tyrant, although Young Eclipse, the second horse, was favourite. His defeat caused large sums of money to be lost. At Ascot, three weeks later, Young Eclipse retrieved his position and beat Tyrant by half a neck. It has been stated that the present year, 1902, is the centenary of Goodwood, but the following, from the *Times* of May 3rd, settles the point: "Goodwood races were uncommonly well attended. All the matches were rode by gentlemen. This is the second year of their meeting, and from the great number of persons that attended from all parts it bids fair to rival the famous club at Bibury."

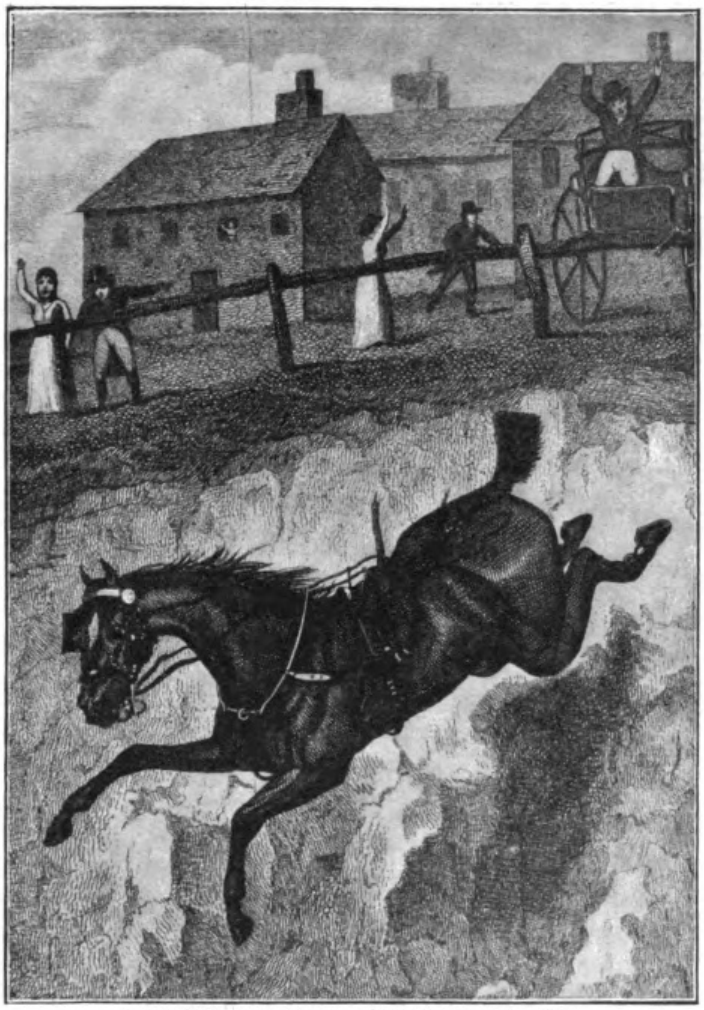
The accommodation of the Port of London is engaging the serious attention of commercial men at the present time, and in 1802 the docks were being constructed. We give a view of the West India Docks, which were opened with great *éclat* on August 27th, "now to become the receptacle of a great portion of our national wealth."

The next illustration records a disaster that happened at Broadstairs on September 1st. Captain Laing was driving a gig into the town



THE WEST INDIA DOCKS, OPENED AUGUST 27, 1802.

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DISASTER AT BROADSTAIRS, SEPTEMBER 1, 1802.

from St. Peter's, when the horse took fright and dashed down the hill towards the parade. Upon reaching the cliff the horse made a leap over, but by a miracle the gig caught in some rails. The shafts snapped off, the horse was dashed to pieces at the bottom of the cliff, but the vehicle stopped short and the driver escaped unhurt. A similar accident befell the Duchess of Devonshire at Ramsgate a few weeks later. "Her Grace's curricle horses took fright and were making full speed to the cliff, when her cries happily alarmed some labourers, who succeeded in stopping the high-mettled racers." Hyde Park was the scene of even a third occurrence of this character, on Sunday, November 28th. In this case the two horses plunged furiously into the Serpentine and were drowned, the gentlemen driving being rescued with considerable difficulty.

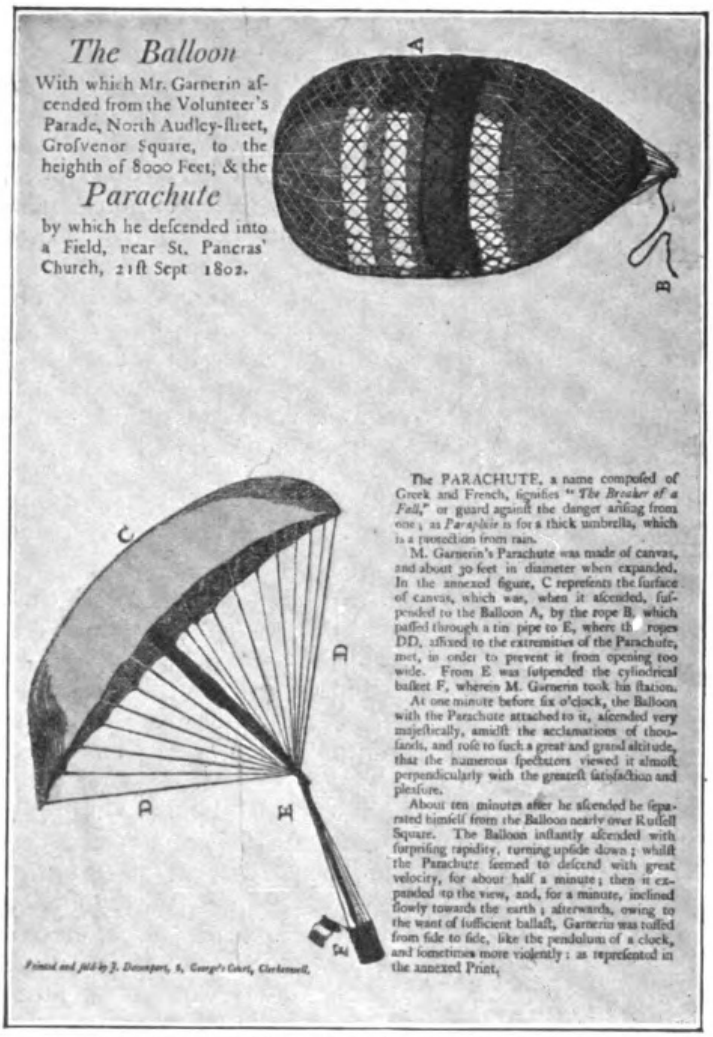
Directly after his election for Westminster, Fox, with some friends, set out on a Continental tour; and at Paris he was received and entertained by Bonaparte. This action aroused much comment in Conservative circles, and caused a number of satires to be published. One of these is reproduced here, and is entitled, "English Patriots Bowing at the Shrine of Despotism." The reception took place on September 3rd.

The year 1802 witnessed a mania for ballooning, and also saw the first parachute descent. The hero was M. Garnerin, a Frenchman, and the interesting event took place on September 21st, from St. George's Parade, North Audley Street. A record of the event informs us that "M. Garnerin, when at the height of 8,000ft., made his descent with a parachute, and safely descended in a field



CARICATURE AGAINST FOX'S VISIT TO NAPOLEON, SEPTEMBER 3, 1802.

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THE FIRST PARACHUTE DESCENT, SEPTEMBER 21, 1802.

between St. Pancras Church and the Small-pox Hospital."

On Lord Mayor's Day the weather was exceptionally fine, and the gilded state coach with which Londoners are familiar was then used for the first time.

The mutinies that had occurred with uncomfortable frequency at the Nore, Spithead, and elsewhere caused the authorities much concern; and on November 18th a conspiracy to sow disaffection in the Army was discovered, and Colonel Despard and others were arrested at the Oakley Arms, Lambeth, and while in prison were "heavily ironed on both legs." A trial subsequently took place, and Despard was found guilty and suffered the extreme penalty. We give his portrait.

One or two miscellaneous items must conclude our review. Ladies who devote themselves to the cause of charity may note as a novelty that on Sunday, August 29th, "at a charity sermon at Ramsgate, the Duchess of Devonshire, the Duchess of Newcastle, and others received the contributions at the doors." At the same time the Duchess of St. Albans and Lady Heathcote were rendering like service at Margate. We usually associate the introduction of the Christmas-tree with the Prince Consort, but the following tells another story. The *Times*, January 2nd, 1802: "Yesterday Her Majesty gave a children's ball at Windsor. In the centre of the ball-room was placed a tree resembling an evergreen, on which was a variety of toys to be distributed among the children previous to their departure." And all true lovers of their country will be in accord with the following leading-article sentiment of the *Times* of November 27th, which avers that "Every British statesman must now be aware of the great importance of maintaining a good understanding with the United States of America. The two countries may be so mutually serviceable or so mutually mischievous to each other that the utmost pains should be employed to cultivate not only peace, but to improve every sentiment of kindness and affection."



COLONEL DESPARD, ARRESTED FOR TREASON, NOVEMBER, 1802.

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CHRISTMAS.

BY LEONARD LARKIN.



HAS anybody in these days seen such a thing as a wassail-bowl? Nobody that I have questioned owns one; and if anybody did I don't believe he'd know what to put into it. I inquire for wassail at the Stores, regularly every Christmas, without the smallest success. I don't know where I first got the idea that wassail was a liquid, but it seems I was quite wrong; the young man on the wine and spirit floor didn't seem to have heard of it, and suggested the ironmongery department. The assistant in the ironmongery department was quite polite to me, but very indignant at the ignorance of the wine and spirit man, who, he protested, might have known that it was the greengrocery side that I wanted. The greengrocery young man told me that many people laboured under the vulgar error that wassail was a kind of tomato, but, as a matter of fact, it was a newly-introduced sort of cheese. This information seemed to surprise the shopman at the cheese counter, who wouldn't be quite sure, but had an idea that the article I required was a waterproof blacking strongly recommended by the boot and shoe department. The young man in the boot and shoe department smiled scornfully and assured me that as a matter of simple fact wassail was the registered title of an improved double perambulator on a new principle; but, realizing that the perambulator would bring me to the ironmongery department once more, I flung my arms round the lift-man's neck and implored to be carried out into the fresh air of the open street, where I might cool my brow against a friendly lamp-post.

It is a bitter reflection that the plague of Christmas-box hunters, though it may punish the guilty, will, nevertheless, fall equally on the righteous as on the unrighteous. Why should I "fork out" to the butcher's boy because his master has been charging me for English beef and giving me American at fourteen ounces to the pound for a whole twelvemonth? Purely in gratitude for that pestiferous tune he whistles under my study window every morning, or merely because his dog fights all the neighbouring cats in my area? And who is the water company's turncock that he should blackmail me—the water company's turncock, that uniformed compromise between a railway porter and a parish beadle, who leans against one kitchen poker while he strolls leisurely round another? *I* don't want him to turn off my alleged

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"constant supply" in the hot weather—I would rather he left it alone; and now in the cold weather—gr-r-r-rh!—must I pay for being reminded of cold water?

I find it difficult to believe that once on a time nobody asked me for Christmas-boxes, but some people—not many, though—actually presented them to me. That was when I was a small boy and lived in a place where Christmas was kept in a very old-fashioned way. There was no actual wassail-bowl—that is a thing I never expect to see. But we did have a Christmas log, which we might have called a Yule log if we had thought of it. It was a tough bit of timber, lighted each year by aid of the charred remains of the last. This custom of keeping the half-burned fag of the Christmas log till next year was very general in our part of the country, for it was well known to preserve the house from fire in the interval. But nowadays, such is the growth of luxury and extravagance that people substitute expensive insurance premiums for the economical expedient I remember. But to be effectual the log *must* be preserved for the whole year. In the only house in our neighbourhood that was burned down in my time the log was utterly destroyed in the fire, and so only lasted four months; which proves the rule to the mind of any reasonable person.

The snap-dragon was another of our mysterious rites which seems to be neglected now. Perhaps it is considered a sinful waste of a liquid which might so much more worthily be used for other purposes; cleaning brass candlesticks, I think, was the use once recommended by a friend. But, reason or not, in these degenerate and effeminate days our hardy forefathers' fine old love of burnt fingers seems to have languished sadly. Even flap-dragon is extinct, I believe, though that offered the sterner joy of burnt noses. Do you understand the rules of the fine old national sport of flap-dragon? It was not a pursuit in favour with the wealthy and the great, and I doubt if ever a duke experienced the fierce delights of the sport. It was practised, in fact, among those lesser noblemen who were in the habit of drinking beer out of gallon cans, and were not always particular what else the can contained so long as the beer was there. In the game of flap-dragon the can contained, beside (or, rather, in the middle of) the beer, an upright candlestick with a piece of candle in it—alight; and anybody was at liberty to drink as much of the beer as he could. When the can was tilted a little way the candle threw out a sort of hint, as it were, in the shape of a blob of hot grease; but the ardent sportsman never hesitated for a trifle like that, and, in fact, some sorts of candle were thought rather to improve the flavour of the beer; at least, when the grease fell into it direct, and not first by way of the sportsman's eye. In any case the candle, tilted a little farther, followed up the hint bodily, and there was a sudden crisis in the proceedings, and a great complication of spilt beer, flaming candle and whiskers, scorched countenance, and hasty remarks. And so the dragon was successfully flapped to everybody's satisfaction.

The waits still promote a healthy wakefulness, just as they did in my young days, but they charge for their supply of insomnia in a lump at the end of the contract now, instead of getting nightly instalments on the old plan. They have developed a distrustful habit of keeping well out in the middle of the road,

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so that the lavish old mediæval largesse, distributed from a water-jug, is going altogether out of fashion. But still, even in these basely utilitarian days, I have known a trombone to be suddenly overcome by choking emotion on the unexpected contribution of a boot-jack to the fund. The carol-singers, however, still take their pay in instalments, and as many instalments as they can get. I am speaking, of course, of the boys who sing on my front steps just when I take my after-dinner nap. There is nothing old-fashioned about these boys—nothing at all except the carol. In the old times the pretence was kept up that the payment was made for the singing instead of for the leaving off; but with the march of civilization and the advance of democracy all these pedantic old forms are being swept away. It is a business-like age, and the carol-singers, correspondingly business-like, leave off in the middle of a verse when the coppers (pennies I mean, not policemen) arrive, and scuttle off to catch another customer without delay. Silence being paid for, the article is delivered instantly, and no time is wasted in pretending that the money is paid for something else.



Snow, too—snow was another Christmas institution we seemed to see more of in my younger days. We see it now, of course, but somehow it seems to dodge Christmas, and we have to imitate it with Epsom salts stuck on a Christmas card with gum. We get it sometimes, though, as I can remember a little while back. But stay—I think it was in 1886, and that is sixteen years ago. If I don't look out I shall be letting out my age itself. I remember this particular Christmas Day because I got most gloriously and seasonably snowed up on my way to a friend's in the country. My train was outrageously late, so that I missed connection at a junction, and was finally turned out into a pitiless white world at a roadside station five miles short of where my friend must have been waiting for hours in his dog-cart. There were no more trains, there was no inn, no vehicle, no dinner—nothing! Nothing but a staring stationmaster and a porter, who had most obviously (and offensively) had dinner at midday, my portmanteau, my rug, an umbrella, a stick, and—a barrel of oysters. This last was intended as a little present for my host. The snow was actually feet deep; it dragged down miles of telegraph line and posts that night, and I—well, I had a barrel of oysters. I think the very bitterest and most hideous piece of irony I ever saw or heard of in my life was that barrel of oysters. On a freezing blizzard of a night like that, what possible item of human aliment could offer such agonizing mockery to a hungry derelict like me as a barrel of oysters? If only there had been nothing at all I shouldn't have felt it quite so keenly. Life might have been sustained for a certain period on leather rug-straps and the soap in my shaving-box—such things have been heard of in other Arctic explorations. But there, I won't talk of it any more. Think of it, dream of it, desolate man

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— as the poet didn't say. A barrel of oysters!

You see, that all comes of talking about snow. I never hear snow mentioned without recalling that Christmas night and that diabolical barrel of oysters on the desolate, snow-laden platform of that desert railway-station. But surely the anecdote is comforting to such of you as are sitting by a nice large fire, with THE STRAND MAGAZINE and a pipe, and perhaps a glass of wassail-mixture to clean the brass candlesticks with. I think, if anything in this world could make a man grateful for his Christmas dinner, it would be to remember me on that swirling night with my icy, dripping barrel of oysters.

Have you ever tried Christmas furmety? Probably not; nor have I. What is more, I feel as though I could rub along without it still. But in case anybody may be more venturesome than I, here is an old recipe which I have just been reading:—

"Take fresh wheat and bray it in a mortar, that the hulls be all gone off, and seethe it till it burst, and take it up and let it cool; and take clean, fresh broth and sweet milk of almonds, or sweet milk of kine, and temper it all; and take the yolks of eggs. Boil it a little, and set it down and mess it forth"—"mess it forth" is admirable—"with fat venison or fresh mutton."

There you are—you may temper it and mess it forth, and keep your own temper if you mess it more than you intend. But the venison or mutton may be left out—personally I should prefer leaving out the other things too—for the furmety may be regarded as complete without it. In that case you must add plenty of sugar. Yes, sugar is what it says in the book. Having done all this, you may do what you like with the result. I should think it would be rather a good idea to pitch it out of the window.

Plum-porridge seems to have been a more important thing even than furmety. It was, in fact, the original of the plum-pudding that will insure so many bilious attacks on the 25th of this month. If you would like to go back to the earlier fashion, plum-porridge would seem to be easy enough to make. You take the raw materials of the present style of plum-pudding, pitch them into the soup, and there you are. You can add anything else you fancy, from any part of the larder you please, I should judge, going by the different old recipes I have seen: a little salad, perhaps, a few sardines, half a pound of cheese, a pint of mustard, and a gallon of treacle might improve it, and, anyway, couldn't make it much worse. If you think it wasteful to make pigs'-wash with it, or fire it at Christmas-box hunters from an upper window, you may distribute it among the deserving poor; but in that case it will be well to avoid the neighbourhood of the deserving poor for some time afterwards.

Perhaps on the whole, however, you will prefer to keep your soup and your pudding on separate plates, in the feeble fashion of this later age; you will possibly be very nearly as ill after all, which is probably the main object. Our robuster great-grandfathers seem to have experienced some difficulty in summoning up a bilious attack worthy of so great an occasion, and, like the determined old heroes they were, they took heroic measures, and no doubt their desperate valour was crowned with success and sick-headache. "Pheasants drenched in ambergrease," we read, was another of the desperate expedients they tried, and I hope I shall never hear another phrase so provocative of deadly discomfort in the stomach. "Ambergrease" itself is terrible, with its horrid suggestions of the cleaning of an old briar pipe, and when I go for comfort to the dictionary I find that ambergrease is "a morbid secretion of the spermaceti whale"! A morbid secretion of the spermaceti whale! Good heavens! After that give me my houseless snowstorm, my rug-straps, and my freezing barrel of oysters.

There is one fine old British sport, by the way, first practised by Cromwell's soldiers two hundred and fifty years ago, that is still regularly revived in many parishes at Christmas, though in a far feebler way than that practised by the Ironsides, who were not particular, either, as to what time of the year they indulged in the game. In those hearty days the implements were matchlocks, hammers, axes, picks, spades, brickbats, and clinkers, and ancient churches were the scenes of the diversion. Many a headless effigy, smashed carving, or vanished window gives witness to the weight of the merry pick or the deadly accuracy of the festive brickbat wielded by those pleasantly pious old saints. Nowadays the scene is still the church, but the feebler implements (except the hammers) are tin-tacks, screws, staples, holly, and evergreen, and the noble sport is followed by curates and enthusiastic ladies. The up-to-date name for it is "decorating the church," and notwithstanding the lack of picks and brickbats it is surprising what a

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deal of Ironsiding a healthy curate can get through in an hour with a box of nails and a hammer, flitting merrily from pulpit to rood-screen and from altar-rail to high-backed pew, sometimes by exception hitting an iron nail, more usually a thumb-nail, but in the majority of whacks taking it out of oak panelling and carving and ancient plaster. One rule of the game is that the curate, *being* a curate, and, moreover, being in church, must not make any remark when his thumb gets it, but may relieve his feelings by an extra wild swipe at the consecrated fane. And a kind lady with a flaming wall-text and a gallon of tin-tacks can Cromwellize admirably, too, getting more twisted tacks into a square foot of old panelling than the inexperienced would believe it to be capable of holding. After Christmas there is a sort of return match, in which the curate and the ladies wield pincers, pliers, and tongs, much innocent rivalry being exhibited as to who can snatch out the nail with the most timber attached to it.

The experienced find that the best results are obtained at this stage by the combined use of hammer and pincers—the hammer to knock the nail sideways first, and so ensure a handsome output of splinters at the final extraction. Thus healthy sport and respect for the antique are combined with a proper display of greengrocery on the occasion of the Church's chief service of the year, while the curate and the young ladies are given an opportunity of leaving their marks for the admiration of posterity by the side of those of Jedediah Snuffletext and his comrades.



And the sexton will say to visitors, "That there's where Cromwell's soldiers knocked the top off the font, and this here's where the curate drove a staple into a wooden angel's chest, and them chips an' splinters is where the squire's niece put in a four-inch screw with a good hard whang of the vestry poker, and there's a dispute about that there wooden figure on the tomb with half its head split off; some says Puritans, and some says the last rector's sister with a big lump of holly and a bill-hook."

I have heard of some poor-spirited rectors who are out of sympathy with this time-honoured sport, and who tyrannically insist that Christmas decorations must be tied up carefully with string. But there are not very many of them, let us hope; and even they have no legal right to search a lady's pocket for tin-tacks.

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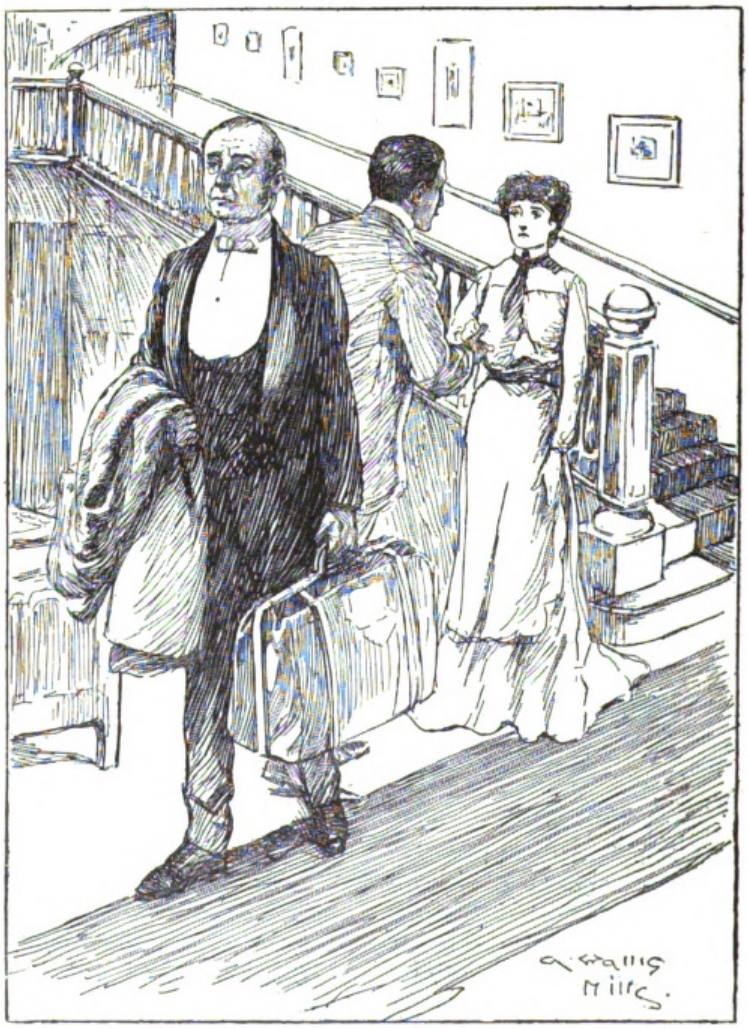
Miss Wren's Device.

By Mrs. Newman.

"AND you said nothing about it last night lest it should seem too sad a home-coming for me—yes, I understand."

"I wanted you to have a night's rest before you heard. It is so hard for you coming home to such trouble as this, and I hoped——" Helen Wyndham hesitated, eyeing her sister with a wistful, questioning look, then went on in a low voice: "Dear Audrey, I thought you might perhaps have brought some good news to set against the bad."

The colour mounted to the young girl's face, and her grey eyes were shadowed with the consciousness that she, too, had hoped, and that her hope had been unfulfilled. She had the night before returned home after a three weeks' stay with some friends in the north, where was gathered a large house-party to celebrate the heir's coming of age. From hints and half admissions in her letters with reference to one of the guests there, the elder sister had quite expected to hear of an engagement having come about. Her anxious questionings had been met by the reply that there was nothing to tell; but quick-eyed love had seen there was something to be borne.



"HE BADE HER GOOD-BYE WITH GRAVE, COOL POLITENESS."

To hear that, from comparative affluence, her sister and she had suddenly become penniless had, indeed, seemed but of secondary importance in contrast with another blow that had fallen upon Audrey Wyndham.

She had had what appeared to be the strongest reasons for believing that she had won the heart of the one man in the world to whom she could give her own. Although the words had not been spoken, she had been led to believe that Philip Denman was about to ask her to be his wife.

Parting at night with a lingering hand-clasp, and with apparently the deepest devotion in eyes and tone, he had expressed the hope that she would on the morrow give him the opportunity to say what she must know he was longing to put into words, and had met her the next morning as might a mere chance acquaintance.

At the breakfast-table he had announced his intention of leaving the Hall that morning, and afterwards took his departure without seeking an interview with her or making the slightest allusion to what had passed. He bade her good-bye with grave, cool politeness, merely remarking that they were going different ways and might not meet again for some time. She had contrived to reply in

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the same strain. None present had seen her humiliation, but the blow had struck deep into her woman's heart.

"Had she, blinded by her own feelings, failed to read his aright?" she asked herself. "Had he assumed that coldness of speech and bearing for the purpose of showing her she had been mistaken?" The hot colour flamed into her cheeks at the bare thought of being supposed to make a mistake of that kind. But she saw she must keep a tight rein over her feelings in the presence of her sister, who was already overwhelmed with trouble.

"You are sure you have told me the worst, Helen?"

"What could be worse? Everything is gone; we shall be penniless! It is so hard for you, Audrey!" ejaculated Helen—a woman of about thirty-five and still beautiful, although her face lacked some of the power and character so marked in her sister, who was barely nineteen.

Audrey looked at her with yearning eyes; but, afraid of yielding to sentiment, kept back the words that sprang to her lips. With what was meant for a careless tone, but with paling cheeks as she glanced round at the familiar surroundings, she said:—

"We must give up all this and leave here, of course."

"We may, perhaps, be able to let this house for the remainder of the term it is on our hands. I thought I ought to pay Jane and Emma and let them go at once."

Audrey nodded. "Yes, it was best."

"Cook begged to stay on until—we go."

The young girl's lips trembled, but she once more overcame, and the lines about her mouth were firm, as she quietly asked:—

"How does Mr. Grant explain it, Helen? He is responsible, of course. Has he been down here?"

"He is gone, none knows whither. It appears that after the death of the co-trustee, and before another could be appointed, he speculated, or made away with the money in some way, and the whole has disappeared. The lawyer says that I ought—that is, I might have——"

Less interested in what might have been than in what was, Audrey put in:—

"We must go to some poor neighbourhood in London and see what can be done. Oh, yes, I will try giving lessons in music or something or another," with grand indefiniteness. "And you can see to the housekeeping. We shall get on some way"; conscious meanwhile that the habit of living gracefully and the indulgence of refined tastes and sense of the beautiful were not the qualifications most necessary for earning a livelihood. If she had a special talent in any one direction, she was not as yet aware that she had.

"If I could only spare you!"

"No tears, Helen. We must face the difficulty, and we cannot do that if we indulge in sentiment," keeping back the sob rising in her own throat. "How are two women without experience to set about earning a living?—that's the problem we have to solve."

"Yes," dolefully assented Helen, feeling that it was a problem not likely to be solved by her.

"How about typewriting or a clerkship?" mused Audrey, beginning to feel that the recognition of her deficiencies meant something, and that the stir in her mental atmosphere did not arise from despair. "I am not stupid; no. I certainly ought to be capable of doing what so many girls show they can do. A clerk has only to write letters, cast up accounts, and that kind of thing, I suppose. One might learn to do that, and do it well, without being a genius."

The door was opened, and the servant entered with a letter.

"I suppose it is for you, Helen," said Audrey, after glancing at the address: "To the Occupier of Sea View," adding, in the hope of bringing a smile to her sister's face, "Are you the occupier of the View, or——"

"Open it, Audrey; only a circular, perhaps."

She took the letter from the envelope and glanced through it, an amused smile coming into her eyes. "Listen, Helen," proceeding to read it aloud:—

"'Miss Montague Wren wishes to know whether a part—not less than four or five rooms—of Sea View is to be let. Miss Wren would require the rooms for three or four months, and, as she would object to other people being taken, she would be willing to pay liberal terms—namely, seven guineas a week; although this must be understood to be strictly inclusive. The house has been recommended to Miss Wren as genteel, quiet, and otherwise suited to the requirements of a convalescent invalid, which her brother, Mr. Montague Wren, now is, requiring sea air and the comforts of a country home.'"

"It must have been intended for the former tenant here. The house was formerly let in that way. The writer did not know the name of the people, I suppose."

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"Genteel! The sea air we could promise, and the quiet; but how about—are we genteel, Helen? Lay your hand upon your heart and answer me that, my dear."

"Do you mean——?"

Audrey nodded. "Only two of them," she murmured, "and the brother tucked into the last sentence as of small importance in comparison with Miss Montague Wren, his 'requirements' notwithstanding. Yes, it might do."



"JUST CONCENTRATE YOUR MIND UPON THAT SEVEN GUINEAS A WEEK."

"Audrey! You are not thinking——"

"Oh, yes, I am. Why should we not take them? Just concentrate your mind upon that seven guineas a week and the rest will seem easy."

"Let part of the house in that way? Have Jane and Emma back, do you mean?"

"No, indeed, we should not make much that way. We might have Sally from the village to help Hannah in the morning, and we ourselves might do something, without its being necessary for you, at any rate, to be much in evidence. You see, it would be an opportunity for us to gain a little experience, and—now, don't look superior, my dear, like that Miss Fitz-Something, who used to worry everyone about her better days when they went into her shop. We must try to imitate good Mrs. Widger, who was so desirous of ordering herself reverently towards her betters," adding, with an anxious glance at her sister's pale face, "Only a form of hero-worship, you know, if one reverences the right kind of people, and if the Wrens do not prove to be heroic we should still recognise the claims of seven guineas a week upon us. Of course you consent, Helen?" taking quick note of the half smile in her sister's face.

"If you really think we ought—if you do not mind," hesitatingly.

"You see, there are so many things we shall have to learn not to mind"; adding, in reply to the other's lugubrious shake of the head, "Now, Helen, if we do not lose caste by serving the poor, why should we lose it by serving the rich? If we did, it would make no difference now. Caste will have to go with the rest. Say you agree?"

"For the present, then. I suppose it is the best we can do just now."

"Then you have only to write to Miss Montague Wren, offer our best rooms, take the credit for being genteel, and promise that she shall be as quiet as she pleases, as she may, you know, when the sea does not roar, which it really ought not to do at a Wren. Shall I write for you?"

"If you will. I should hardly know what to say."

Seating herself at the writing-table Audrey hurriedly dashed off a few lines, then read them aloud:—

"'Dear Madam,—In reply to your letter I beg to say that I am the present tenant here, and should be glad to let the rooms you require at the terms you mention. The house is spacious, airy, and quiet, and I could, I think, promise the usual thing

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in the way of attendance and so forth.—Yours truly, HELEN WYNDHAM.'

"Does that sound right, Helen? I borrowed the 'spacious and airy' from the agent's circular, but it is true of this place."

"Yes, oh, yes"; not liking to say that to her it sounded rather offhand.

"We must take Hannah into our confidence; fortunately she cooks well, and is very willing. We will give them the best rooms, and turn the library at the back into a sanctum for ourselves, so that you may keep as much out of the way as you please."

"But don't you think we might have Emma back, just for the time the Wrens are here, Audrey?"

"Emma is expensive, and she does not like to demean herself by waiting on those who are not quite the *crème de* — I'm afraid she said the cheese. Very flattering to us, I suppose, but we could not be sure that the Wrens are not only milk, or even milk and water."

"The relief it is to see you more like yourself again, Audrey."

"It is something gained to have made you think I am," thought Audrey, stifling a sigh.

They were not left long in doubt as to Miss Wren's decision. A telegram arrived the next morning, stating that her brother and she might be expected by the afternoon express, due at five o'clock.

"It seems very sudden," nervously ejaculated Helen Wyndham, looking helplessly from her sister to Hannah, summoned to the council.

"We shall be ready for 'em, never fear, ma'am, so as I've got Sally to do as I like with," said Hannah, not a little proud of being taken into her mistresses' confidence. Not that she believed they were in such straits as they imagined. It might seem poverty to them, in contrast with past affluence, but, of course, they had sufficient to live upon.

The house, large and well built, with sloping lawns, old-fashioned fruit and flower gardens, and some extent of ground about it, had been taken for their widowed mother, who was an invalid, and after her death the sisters had lived on there. It was a home after their own hearts, with its beautiful surroundings and comparative isolation from the bustling, much-frequented town, a mile or so distant. Their income of nearly a thousand each had allowed ample margin for their expenses, and the indulgence of the younger sister's somewhat large ideas in the way of giving and spending.



"A TALL, THIN, ANGULAR-SHAPED WOMAN STEPPED OUT OF THE STATION OMNIBUS."

Facing the house was a gap in the cliff, winding down to a fishing village and small bay.

Hannah and her subordinate worked with a will. A dainty repast was spread in the dining-room, and all was in readiness when the sound of approaching wheels was heard in the road running between the cliff and the gates before the house.

The sisters went into the hall to receive the new-comers, unable as yet to divest their minds of the idea that they were guests.

"Now, Helen!" ejaculated Audrey, taking note of the increased anxiety in her sister's pale face. "How can you expect me to be equal to the occasion if you give way? Take courage, my dear; you look genteel enough to meet even a Wren—quite a model—— Ah! here they are!"

A tall, thin, angular-shaped woman of about fifty years of age, with beady black eyes and sharply-defined features, stepped out of the station omnibus and preceded her companion, who was arguing some point with the driver, into the house.

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"Miss Wyndham, I suppose?" she began, in a somewhat *haut en bas* tone. Without waiting for a reply, she went on, giving a half glance in Audrey's direction. "Be good enough to see that the trunks and packages are put in the right rooms; they are plainly labelled."

Hannah and Sally pressed forward to bring in the innumerable packages and parcels heaped up inside the vehicle.

"I hope the rooms face south," recommenced Miss Wren. "That is very essential."

"Yes, they have a south aspect," replied Helen.

"Very good. I omitted to mention it in my letter, but"—more graciously—"it is satisfactory to find we shall have what we desire. I thought, too, it would probably occur to you that, after a journey, we might require—— Oh, yes, I see," as Audrey threw open the dining-room door and Miss Wren saw the well-spread table. "You are Miss Wyndham's sister, are you not?"

"Yes."

Miss Wren looked at her not very approvingly, as she mentally added, "Not a very desirable person to have about one. Much too——" She had not time to decide what was superabundant. Hannah was ushering in Mr. Wren, a tall, thin man, apparently some five or six years older than his sister, and not unlike her in some respects. Reticence and strong will were the chief characteristics of his face; but his mouth did not appear so incapable of a smile as did hers.

Mr. Montague Wren was the head of a successful firm of London solicitors, and had made a substantial fortune, which, as he cared nothing for the luxuries of life, had largely accumulated in course of years. He had, indeed, come to take so keen an interest in legal work as to care for little else, allowing himself no time for necessary relaxation until symptoms of a complete breakdown developed themselves, and he was forced to give himself four or five months' rest out of range of the office.

He had left the arrangements of all minor details of their flitting to his sister, as his habit was with regard to matters he cared nothing about, and she had come to think that she managed a great deal more than she did.

"Fourteen packages," Miss Wren was saying, as she followed her brother into the room. "Those numbered one to six to be brought in here and the rest taken to the bedrooms." Turning towards Audrey, to whom she had been speaking over her shoulder, she put a packet of some special tea into her hand.

"Three spoonfuls if they are large, and four if they are small. You prefer tea at this time, do you not, Horace?"

"Yes, with something substantial, if—— Oh, I see that has been thought of," glancing at the table. "Be as quick as you can, Priscilla," he added, as they went to their rooms.

Returning presently to the dining-room, he said to Audrey, who had opened the parcel and was proceeding to measure out the tea:—

"You are the parlour-maid, I suppose?"

The colour rushed hotly to her cheeks. "No." Then she remembered, and, with a smile at herself, less curtly went on, "My name is Wyndham."

"Oh, indeed; a relative of our good landlady here, perhaps."

"I am Miss Wyndham's sister."

He was looking at her more attentively, and not a little admiringly.

Slightly flushed, a smile curving her beautiful lips, and her grey eyes radiant with amusement, she paused a moment, the spoon posed in her hand, returning the gaze of this "odd-looking specimen of humanity," as she mentally dubbed him.

His lips fell slightly apart and he was at a loss for words. He was accustomed to deal with human nature from a strictly legal point of view, as material for the kind of manipulation he was an adept in, and he had not as yet happened to have a young and beautiful girl, of a type such as hers, for a client.

"Have you had a long illness, Mr. Wren?" she asked, with kindly intention, still unable to divest her mind of the idea that he was a guest whom it behoved her to put at his ease. "Will you not sit down?"

Without a word, his eyes still fixed upon her, he sat down.

Little suspecting what was in his mind, she was wondering why he looked at her "in that idiotic way." But she presently remembered that he had been ill, and came to the conclusion, "Oh, well, the poor man wants his 'substantials,' perhaps, and I ought to be quicker."

Catching up the tea, she went out of the room.

"What do you think of them, Audrey? Shall we be able to get on with them, do you think?" anxiously asked Helen, as Hannah carried the tea into the dining-room.

"Oh, yes; they are only prim, fussy old

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bodies, who will rather amuse us with their funny ways, I fancy."

"Ought not one of us to go in and ask if they have everything they want?"

"Oh, well, I suppose we ought. Leave it to me," said Audrey, following Hannah out of the room.

Miss Wren was making minute inquiries of the somewhat impatient Hannah as to whether she was quite sure the water had reached boiling-point, and only just reached it, before making the tea.

"My sister hopes you have all you require, Miss Wren," courteously said Audrey, meeting her eyes with a pleasant smile.

"Yes, I think so. What have you there, Horace? Chicken, tongue, pigeon-pie. Oh, yes, Miss Wyndham appears to have done her best. You can say everything is satisfactory—so far."

Audrey demurely walked out of the room, and Miss Wren went on to her brother: "Rather above her position, I think. She seems quite lacking in——" She paused, finding it as difficult to explain what was lacking as she had previously found it to say what was superabundant. Glancing towards her brother, who seemed absorbed in thought, she added:—

"She appears to be somewhat younger than her sister, and has probably been encouraged to think too much of herself, as girls are so apt to do in these days. Miss Wyndham gives me the impression of being a spiritless, yielding kind of person, who would allow a younger sister to have her own way too much. Does she strike you as being rather good-looking — in a way, Horace?"

"Good-looking?" he slowly repeated. "Well, not precisely that"; too wise to say that Audrey Wyndham was the most beautiful girl he had ever seen. Good-looking, indeed! he was thinking. Why, where were Priscilla's eyes?

"She might be considered so — by some, perhaps. Not everyone would have the perception to recognise what is wanting."

As days went by Miss Wren was ready to admit that, little drawbacks notwithstanding, it would be possible to spend a few months pleasantly enough at Sea View. The advantages had certainly not been overstated. The house was well, not to say luxuriously, furnished, and there was all that could be expected in the way of attendance and what-not. She was, indeed, not a little surprised at the refinement of the surroundings, sagely



"WHY SHOULDN'T SHE FAN HERSELF IF SHE IS TOO WARM, PRISCILLA?"

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opining that Miss Wyndham had seen better days.

Her opinion of the younger sister did not, meanwhile, become more favourable. She appeared desirous enough to please, and was certainly not ill-tempered. Miss Wren flattered herself she would be quite equal to deal with a defect of that kind; but there was a certain indescribable something about the young girl to which she decidedly objected. It happened, too, that she saw a great deal more of the younger than of the elder sister.

When she desired to see Miss Wyndham, it was Audrey who always came to receive her minute directions. Moreover, she was beginning to suspect that, if dignity and lofty condescension had any effect, it was not that intended. She could not, indeed, be always sure that Audrey was not endeavouring to suppress a smile when listening to her elaborate explanations as to how things should be done.

"It is the airs she assumes, Horace. Only yesterday I wished to give some further directions about dinner, and found her in the side garden they call their own, lying in a hammock, her hat tipped over her eyes, fanning herself with the air of a princess and reading——"

"Why shouldn't she fan herself if she is too warm, Priscilla, and why shouldn't she read?"

"But I haven't told you what she was reading. 'Sesame and Lilies,' if you please; nothing less!"

"Why should it be anything less? Why need you concern yourself about what she reads?"

Miss Wren pondered over his words for a few moments, and came to the conclusion that there was indeed nothing to fear. No danger of his getting into an entanglement such as he had once previously got into. Some twenty years before Miss Wren had, she believed, rescued her brother from imminent peril. She had put a great deal of machinery into motion to defend him from the wiles of a scheming widow, and thought that she had succeeded in her purpose without his having suspected what she had done.

He had, in fact, been not a little amused by her efforts to rescue him, and did not interfere because it spared him the trouble of acting for himself. He had been careful to show no sign that he knew what was going on, quite willing she should take the credit for having contrived matters so cleverly and secretly.

Time was passing pleasantly enough with both brother and sister. They spent the greater part of the day in the open air strolling about the grounds or over the downs, and occasionally going to the little bay below to watch the fishing-boats come in.

After awhile Mr. Wren began to find the sea air improve his appetite so much as to necessitate his returning to the house during the morning for a biscuit and glass of wine. At such times it occasionally chanced—it seemed chance to her—that he came upon Audrey in the house or about the grounds, and they exchanged a few words. She found it much easier to get on with him than with his sister, and therefore did not avoid him.

"He is a nice old man enough, Helen, when you get used to his funny little ways, and he seems really quite interested in us. We might, I think, take him into our confidence by-and-by and ask his advice as to what we had better do."

Helen assented in a hopeless, depressed way. Fear and anxiety about the future were telling heavily upon her mind. She could not face difficulties bravely as could her sister, and she shrank nervously from Miss Wren.

A lovely morning early in July Miss Wren was seated in a shady nook of the garden, bending over her netting, in pleasant contemplation of the future as she anticipated it for herself and brother. Dear Horace was getting so much more companionable and easy to get on with as he improved in health, the alternate fits of depression and irritability to which he had been so liable having quite disappeared. He seemed to regard life from quite a different point of view, beginning to talk quite cheerfully about his plans for the future, and informing his sister that he had made up his mind to retire from business and enjoy life.

"Take a house with ground about it, something like this, and play the country squire. Sit under my own vine, and all that kind of thing, Priscilla."

This was a future she found it very agreeable to contemplate. Miss Wren liked country life, and was quite ready to sit with him under the vine.

"The sea air seems to have done wonders for him already," she was thinking. "It was so kind of him to talk in that way about its being quite natural for women to like pretty things, and to ask me what present *I* should choose, knowing as he does that my birthday will soon be here. I am glad I said a diamond ring."

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Her reflections were suddenly brought to a close. Across the summer stillness came the sound of two voices, her brother's and—could it be? Ah, yes, that of Audrey Wyndham joining in!

Miss Wren gently parted the branches of the laurels, screening part of the lawn where she was sitting from the fruit garden, and peered through.

Yes, there was Audrey engaged in gathering strawberries for dessert, Mr. Wren helping her, and looking —— Never before had his sister seen *that* look in his face!

"No, only the quite ripe ones, please. These will not do at all."

He bent down as though to look at them, but the keen eyes watching him saw that his gaze was fixed upon the crimson-tipped fingers.

A dreadful suspicion, which in another moment became certainty, arose in Miss Wren's mind. She saw now why her brother had got into the habit of returning to the house during the morning. How blind she had been—how terribly off her guard! There was not a moment to lose now. He should be saved if it was in her power to save him!



"HIS GAZE WAS FIXED UPON THE CRIMSON-TIPPED FINGERS."

Letting the work she had been engaged upon fall where it might, she rose to her feet and went hurriedly round the shrubbery into the fruit garden. At sight of her Audrey nodded and smiled.

"Will you have some strawberries, Miss Wren—they are just gathered?" holding the basket towards the irate lady. Noticing that Miss Wren was looking rather flushed and heated, she added, "Have you been sitting too long in the sun?"

"I ought to have been here," shortly replied Miss Wren.

"It is more shaded on this side, is it not?" again offering the strawberries.

"No, thank you," stiffly. Then to her brother, "Were you not going to send those papers this morning, Horace?"

Audrey turned away, taking her basket into the house.

"What am I to understand by this, Horace?" began his sister as soon as they were alone. "That Miss Wyndham should have her ends in view is not surprising, nor that she should be ready to avail herself of any opportunity to——"

"A moment, Priscilla. Allow me to inform you of *my* intentions before you speculate upon Miss Wyndham's."

"I only meant to point out that it might be difficult to extricate you a second time from an entanglement."

"Your services will not be required. I have made up my mind to ask Miss Wyndham to be my wife."

This was what he had meant, then! It was Audrey Wyndham who was to sit under the vine with him! It was for her the diamond ring had been purchased!

"Have you forgotten you were fifty-seven last birthday?"

"That is another reason why I should delay no longer."

"Do you really believe that a girl of nineteen——" Miss Wren faltered. In her heart she had not the slightest doubt as

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to what Audrey's course would be. Nor did she omit to blame herself. Of course, she ought to have foreseen what was likely to happen and taken precautions — done anything—to avert a catastrophe such as this before it was too late. There was the set look in her brother's face which experience had taught her meant that open opposition would be worse than useless. She must try to appeal to his feelings in a different way.

Raising her handkerchief to her eyes, she said: "When I gave up my home to devote the rest of my life to you I quite believed you meant what you said about its being your intention to remain unmarried."

"I did mean it—at the time. It was my intention then, Priscilla. I have altered my mind, that's all. And you must excuse my reminding you that the home you gave up was only such as a boarding-house affords, and very frequently changed."

"If you descend to insult—if some designing person has already set you against your sister—I can only say——" Miss Wren discreetly stopped at the right moment to avoid committing herself to any special line of action.

"There has been no insult intended, and Miss Wyndham is, as yet, quite unaware of my intentions." Taking note of the sudden change that came into her face, he meaningly and decidedly went on: "But I shall permit no interference with my plans, and it would be bad policy for anyone to attempt it. Another word, Priscilla. My investments have for the last few years been very successful, and I am much better off than you perhaps imagine. Should all go well for me in this matter, I intend to add substantially to your income. If not—should there be any attempt to thwart me——" He closed his lips, looked straight into her eyes for a moment, then took out his note-book and commenced jotting down some memoranda.

"I may, perhaps, be allowed to remind you that she must be aware you are a rich man."

"I advise you to be careful, Priscilla," he significantly replied, turning away.

After some reflection Miss Wren decided to take his advice. It was not in her nature to refrain from attempting some of the schemes she had so much faith in, but she told herself that she must be careful how she set to work.

No word must now be said to Audrey—there could be no mistaking Horace when he spoke in that tone—and, of course, he must not be allowed to suppose that anything was going on. But it presently occurred to her that something might be done with Miss Wyndham, and, after some consideration, she began to see her way to this.

That the elder sister was very conscientious she knew, but she also believed that there was not a little pride underlying her reserve of manner. If it were possible to arouse this pride, and at the same time get her to pledge her word not to divulge what had taken place between them, all might yet be well.

"Yes, that is what I will do: cautiously lead her to think it is my firm conviction that a trap has been laid for Horace, and, if she is the woman I take her to be, she will be up in arms, bid us begone at once, and keep her sister out of the way until we are safely off the premises. It is simply my duty to do as much as that for his sake, and he will thank me in time to come, when he has got over the infatuation and has leisure to reflect."

Miss Wren lost no time in carrying out her plan. She found an opportunity to speak to Helen Wyndham alone that afternoon. Having seen Audrey cross the road towards the cliffs when she knew that her brother was engaged in replying to his morning's letters, she went straight to the sister's room and, with a grave face, requested Miss Wyndham to give her an interview. There could be but one reply under the circumstances, and Miss Wren proceeded to carry out her plan, and this, she flattered herself, with complete success.

Helen Wyndham had very quickly decided that the Wrens must go, and go at once. The timid, nervous woman, naturally much averse from scenes and painfully conscious of what the giving up of seven guineas a week would mean, had suddenly acquired the courage to do battle with Miss Wren and bid her begone.

"Your brother's entanglement—entangled by my sister! How dare you say it?" exclaimed Helen Wyndham. The most forcible expression she had perhaps ever used in her life. So indignant did she become that the other congratulated herself upon having tied her down to secrecy before introducing the subject.

When, to make quite sure, Miss Wren went on to add a few words to the effect that she felt bound to mention that the doctors had expressed grave doubts as to whether her "poor brother" would ever entirely regain his mental faculties as they had been at best, Helen Wyndham had

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sternly interrupted her. She informed Miss Wren that her brother would be quite as unacceptable to Audrey Wyndham with as without his mental faculties, and bade her take herself and brother away from Sea View.

This was precisely what Miss Wren had planned and hoped for, and she complacently proceeded :—

"Unfortunately, we have just entered upon another month, and we may be obliged—that is, we should not like to lose——" Miss Wren, who had faith in the diplomacy of leaving an adversary to fill in gaps, appeared to hesitate, and, as she expected, Helen Wyndham haughtily put in :—

"If it is to the month's rent you are alluding, I am willing to forego that if you will pack your trunks and go at once."

Again solemnly reminding her of her promise to mention nothing of what had passed between them, Miss Wren accepted the dismissal with a good grace. She had now only to invent an explanation of the cause of their abrupt departure which would throw the blame upon Miss Wyndham and exculpate herself in her brother's mind. Not an easy task, but not, she thought, more than she would be able to compass.

Audrey Wyndham made her way down to a favourite nook in a sheltered part of the cliff. A still evening early in July, the setting sun investing all it touched—the white cliffs, the soft, velvety, green turf of the downs, the steep red roofs of the houses and the church tower of the old town across the bay, and the gently swaying water between—with a new and strange beauty.

Leaning back against the cliff, she sat with her arms round her knees gazing at the scene.

"What would all this say to Miss Wren? Poor old body, one ought to remember how much she misses and have patience with her," she was thinking, the peaceful surroundings already having the effect of softening her own feelings towards that lady.

Her thoughts were presently diverted to other channels. Her eyes were dreamily following a sail hovering like a white bird on the horizon, and her fancy was poising its wings for a flight.



"LEANING BACK AGAINST THE CLIFF, SHE SAT WITH HER ARMS ROUND HER KNEES."

"Take a message from me," she murmured.

"Miss Wyndham."

She had got so far from the actual present that, for the moment, the voice sounded to her ears as though coming from another world in answer to her thought. She turned her eyes in dreamy speculation upon the speaker. Was he a reality, or only the semblance of himself built out of her imagination?

"This is good fortune indeed!"

Philip Denman! The man who had humiliated her and, so to speak, cast aside her love!

Gathering her courage about her, she rose, bowed, and in a quiet, conventional tone said, appearing not to notice his outstretched hand :—

"How do you do, Mr. Denman?" adding, with an effort to speak carelessly, "Lovely sunset, is it not?"

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He glanced westwards for a moment, murmuring something, he hardly knew what, in assent. He had only seen the picture she made with the light upon her yearning face. As she recognised him the colour had faded out of her cheeks and her whole expression changed. Pale and self-contained, she met him with cold conventionality of tone and bearing.

"Have you lost your way, Mr. Denman? If you want to go to the town, the path to the left leads back to the high road, and you have only to keep straight on." Looking at her watch she turned away, adding, "Good-bye."

"Do not go. Pray let me say a few words first, Miss Wyndham. I know what I must appear to you, but the worst are allowed to plead in their own defence," he ejaculated, unmistakable earnestness in every line of his firm, strong face, as he stood bare-headed before her, his soft hat crushed in his hands.

"I do not see what there is to defend, Mr. Denman," she replied, forcing herself to meet his eyes with some semblance of calmness, although her pulses—not so obedient to her will—were throbbing wildly.

"In reality there is nothing, I know that, as you cannot. But circumstances have been terribly against me."

"I do not understand."

"Forgive me if I do not put it in the best way. I can give little thought to that when so much is at stake. There has been a mistake, so disastrous for me as to threaten to shadow my whole life."

The hot colour rushed to her cheeks. "I am sorry, but——"

"Let me speak. The night before I left the Nugents I was hoping you would on the morrow allow me to put my love into words. After you left the ball-room I was talking to Mrs. Elliott, and, *à propos* of I hardly know what, she told me that you were about to become the wife of Lord Greymont, who had just left, and who had, I knew, been hoping to win you."

Her eyes fell. It was not for her to say that Lord Greymont had left in consequence of his disappointment.

"Mrs. Elliott spoke in the presence of her daughter, and in a way to convey the impression that she spoke from knowledge. I saw no reason to doubt her—then."

"What must you have thought of me?" To have appeared to encourage him while engaged to another!

"I thought of you as I always must think, come what may. In fact, I believed that, under the impression I must know of your engagement, you felt you might be with me as with a brother, and that I alone was to blame for misinterpreting you."

She lowered her head with a little sob, and he anxiously went on:—

"The only course that seemed left me was to get away from the Hall as quickly as possible. Could you know what the going away cost me! All interest in life was gone, and I had decided to leave England for an indefinite time, when yesterday a letter from my sister, who had been in my confidence all through and was much troubled about my disappointment, reached me. She has found out Mrs. Elliott's mistake—Enid calls it by another name—and wrote at once to tell me that you and your sister live in this neighbourhood. I was on my way to the town, in the hope of getting your address from the rector or someone there, when by good fortune I caught sight of you sitting here. Will you give me a word of forgiveness, Miss Wyndham—Audrey?" venturing for the first time to use her Christian name. "Only a word?"

The colour was coming and going in her cheeks, but her eyes were still downcast. Happiness had come to her so unexpectedly, and she was almost afraid to believe in it.

He was beginning to take heart, telling himself this surely could not mean rejection. "Only let me hope that I may in time be forgiven, dear Audrey—give me a chance."

"Let me first tell you that things have changed since I saw you last. Ah, no, not I; circumstances. My sister is everything to me. As long as I can remember we have belonged to each other, and—we are penniless. If you, too, are poor, it will mean long waiting and working for us. It would not be right; I would not allow you to fetter yourself, nor must she know——"

He laughed out like a schoolboy. She did not know, as did the more practical Mrs. Elliott, how large his possessions were.

"You will have no excuse for keeping me waiting on that score. But, since you are so scrupulous, I am glad you will be able to feel, by-and-by, that you did not know what you will have to accept with me. As to Miss Wyndham, she will very soon find she has a brother, as well as a sister, to care for her now."

"Do you feel so sure of being accepted?" endeavouring to speak lightly.

"Of course I do; accepted, and forgiven, and everything else that is delightful. Fortunately, there may be a lifetime before

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me in which to prove—— Ah, Audrey mine!"

Yielding for a moment to his caress, then withdrawing with a reticence all her own, she said: "But there is someone else to think of. Every moment's delay is unfair to Helen. Come with me to the house."

"Is this your home?" he asked, as she crossed the road and entered the grounds.

"Part of it is. As I told you, trouble came upon us, and, just as we were at our wits' end what to do, some people offered to take part of the house, and—oh, well, we were glad to have them at the time."

Mr. Wren pieced together the little puzzle his sister presented to him as to the reason for their leaving Sea View, and it did not make a pretty picture. It was a very different picture that brought about his decision to leave. From an upper window he had seen the lovers—there could be no doubt as to their being lovers—approaching the house, and knew there was no hope for him. His sister understands that they must henceforth live apart.

Helen was anxiously debating ways and means, not a little dreading to make the communication that had to be made to Audrey, gloss it over as she might, when she heard Audrey's voice outside the French window giving upon the lawn where she was sitting.

"Where are you, Helen?" adding, as she pushed open the window, "Oh, here she is. I have brought you some news, my dear—a big surprise."

No need for further explanations, the news was telling itself plainly enough.

Philip Denman! Yes, Helen understood.



"WHERE ARE YOU, HELEN?"

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Sensational Magical Illusions.

THE MOST COMPLETE EXPOSÉ EVER PUBLISHED.

THESE articles will be found a clear exposé of many marvellous and popular illusions, the secrets of which have been obtained by years of practical study.

I shall begin by describing many of the leading illusions contained in what is known as "Black Art." To the Mahatmas of the East and the sorcerers of India are attributed the origin of these "midnight revels." The marvels of illusionary effects obtainable in a black art séance have been greatly developed of late years by European magicians of the highest rank. I shall describe four or five of the smartest magical effects, each of which is a perfect illusion, defying all attempts at solution except to those who have made a study of Eastern magic.

It is necessary for the benefit of those who have never seen an act of this kind to explain that everything is performed in a dark chamber — either the whole stage or a chamber fitted up in the centre of it—draped entirely in black—sides, back, floor, and ceiling. The hall is placed almost in darkness, the only lights being a set of sidelights and footlights, which are turned towards the audience with reflectors behind, making it impossible for eyes to penetrate into the darkness beyond them. Everything used in the chamber is white, even the performer's dress, forming a contrast necessary to the illusion.

The séance is usually commenced by the production of tables and goblets from space. In fact, everything required is mysteriously obtained from apparent nothingness. The performer, usually dressed in an Eastern costume, all of white, enters the empty chamber, and, requiring a wand, raises his hand, when one comes floating into it. He next taps the floor at the left side of the chamber and a small table suddenly appears. This he repeats at the right side, with the same result. He now taps one of the tables and a large goblet appears upon it in the same mysterious manner. This also he repeats at the other table, having now two tables several yards apart, with a goblet upon each. The whole are brought forward for inspection and replaced within the chamber. The performer takes one of the goblets, raises it, turns it over and around in several ways, and it is seen that the other is going through exactly the same movements without anyone being near it. The performer replaces his goblet upon the table; but the other remains suspended alone in mid-air, and the performer places a large ring over it and around it, showing wires or any other connection to be absent. He brings it forward and again hands it for examination, but on regaining it does not take it to the table, for by a wave of his hand the table comes dancing out to him and on receiving the goblet dances back to its original position. He next proceeds to borrow several watches and other articles of jewellery, which he takes into the chamber and places in the goblet on the right. They are clearly seen to drop from his hand from several inches above; he shows his hands empty and immediately rushes across to the other goblet, brings it forward, and allows the audience themselves to take out all the jewellery which was placed in the right goblet only a moment previous. Having finished with these articles they disappear as mysteriously and quickly as they appeared.



FIG. 1.—"BLACK ART"—SOME OF ITS MYSTERIES.

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The next illusion performed is the production from space of a live lady's bust suspended in a frame. The performer raises his wand and a large picture-frame suddenly hangs itself upon it. This is brought for examination, then placed in the centre of the chamber, where it remains suspended in mid-air and sets up a swinging motion by itself. It is then covered momentarily with an Eastern rug, and when removed, a lady, devoid of legs, whose body completely fills the frame, is seen swinging with it. The "live picture" is covered momentarily, and when the covering is withdrawn a large Union Jack is seen to have taken the place of the lady, who has vanished.

The performer proceeds next with a decapitation act, in which a lady is beheaded in full view of the audience. At a wave of his hand a lady appears, and hands to him her own gruesome means of execution, a large, glittering sabre, which he takes, and with one swing cuts her head clean off where she stands. Catching the head as it falls, he places a pair of wings at the back of it, when it becomes a flying cherub, and immediately soars all about the chamber, finally returning to his outstretched hand. He then removes the wings and replaces the head upon the lady's shoulders, restoring her to life, for which kindness she quickly embraces him and vanishes. Wishing to get another such share of her favours the performer endeavours to bring her back by magic aid, but is surprised by the appearance of a grinning ghost, whose whole body consists of a skull, with a moving jaw, draped with a white sheet. He catches it, and detaching its skull brings it forward for a closer scrutiny, the jaw moving all the time and the sheet dancing about alone. He then throws the skull into the air and it is seen no more.



FIG. 2.—INVISIBLE ATTENDANT PRODUCING THE TABLE.

The séance is generally concluded by an invisible flight, the vanishing performer immediately reappearing amongst the audience. He takes the dancing sheet and entirely covers himself with it, standing in the centre of the chamber, taking great care to drape himself in such a manner as to show the shape of his body. In a few seconds the sheet collapses, and before it has time to reach the ground a shout is heard at the back of the hall; the audience turning around naturally are surprised to see the performer standing amongst them, smilingly bowing in acknowledgment of the applause which greets him.

As before mentioned, the whole of this takes place in darkness, obtained by the chamber being draped in black velvet and the floor covered with black felt. The brightness of the lights turned towards the audience, contrasting with the denseness of the black behind, dazzles the eye to such an extent that it cannot discern anything in the chamber that is not white or of a very light colour. The stage is all arranged before the act, and the tables are in their respective places, but cannot be seen on account of their being draped with black velvet. The goblets, frame, lady, ghost, etc., are all placed in readiness behind a black screen, also draped. None of this can be seen while they are behind the lights, if kept covered in black, no matter how near to the front they are placed. But how do they float about and appear so mysteriously? Very simply! An assistant is within the chamber, dressed in black velvet throughout, with black gloves and mask, covering all signs of white about him and making him perfectly invisible. He wears no boots, and the felt upon the floor deadens the sound of all his movements. He it is who really produces all the articles. When the performer stretches his hand out for the wand the assistant brings it from behind the screen and hands it to him with a floating movement. As the performer taps the floor he immediately pulls away the black covering (Fig. 2) and the table instantly appears to view. The goblets are painted black inside, allowing him to hold them at the back with his fingers inside, unnoticed. After the tables are both produced he places the goblets upon them at the right moment with one hand while he pulls off the velvet with the other. The exposition is so

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quick and sudden that nothing suspicious can be noticed. The turning of the goblet is also the work of the invisible assistant, and is quickly changed from one hand to another when the ring is being passed over it. The watches, etc., are not placed in the goblet as they appear to be, but dropped behind it into the assistant's hands, who takes them over to the other while the performer is exhibiting his empty hands. The picture-frame is also handed by the assistant, and when it is apparently placed in mid-air is really passed to the assistant, who quickly hangs it up. When it is covered the lady steps from behind the screen to the frame, and stands upon a swing which nearly reaches to the floor behind it and catches hold of the frame sides; the assistant draws away the velvet which draped her, and keeps the swing in motion. The frame is attached to the wires of this swing. The lady is dressed in white to the waist, which exactly reaches the bottom of the frame (see Fig. 3). Below the frame she is dressed in black velvet. When the frame is again covered she steps back behind the screen while the assistant fits the Union Jack in the frame. In the decapitation act there are two ladies, one dressed all in white, the other standing behind her dressed in black, with her head covered by a black hood. When the performer swings the sabre the assistant covers the white lady's head with a black velvet hood, at the same time pulling the hood quickly from the other lady's head, who immediately falls to her knees (see Fig. 4). The illusion looks perfect—a body apparently standing without a head and the head apparently falling. When the wings are put on she flaps them by means of a wire and runs round the chamber, stooping at intervals so as to take an irregular course. The beheaded lady is restored by exactly the reverse method, and she disappears behind the screen. The ghost is danced about on a stick by the assistant, and when its skull is thrown into the air it is caught in a black bag. The performer takes the sheet and goes behind it and hands it to the assistant, and it is the latter who is seen draping himself, the performer running around to the back of the hall meanwhile, where he waits to see the sheet drop. The assistant, allowing time for this, simply lets go the top of the sheet, and, of course, cannot be seen behind it. The performer runs in before it has time to reach the ground, his invisible flight and immediate reappearance greatly astonishing the spectators.



FIG. 3.—THE SWINGING BUST EXPLAINED.

I shall next describe a form of magic which has been recently invented. It is of Chinese origin and consists of many astounding feats of legerdemain, which have caused a profound sensation in London and on the Continent. It was first introduced to London by a most celebrated Chinese magician, who is now flattered by several imitators. I shall expound some of the principal illusions, and commence with that most puzzling trick of catching live fish in mid-air with a rod and line. This trick is now being performed by several methods. I will explain one of the simplest and best of them, which I myself have used with phenomenal success. As seen by the audience, the trick, briefly, is as follows: The performer brings on a fishing rod and line, which he sways about as if fishing, when suddenly, to the great amazement of all, a live gold-fish is seen wriggling on the hook, although that end of the line has been several yards out of reach the whole of the time. It is promptly unhooked



FIG. 4.—"DECAPITATION"—SHOWING THE GIRL'S HEAD COVERED WITH A BLACK HOOD—THE GIRL ACTING FOR THE HEAD FALLING TO HER KNEES.

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and dropped into a globe of water, which is in readiness near, after which the trick is performed for a second time, with the same marvellous result, leaving the audience entirely at their wits' end to guess at even the slightest clue as to "how it is done" (Fig. 5).

The secret lies wholly in the construction of the float and the manipulation of a double line. The float is hollow and made to contain the two live fish. Fig. 6 shows it prepared with the fish



FIG. 5.

down the line as far as the hook, and is easily detached by the performer when apparently unhooking the fish. The float is kept closed by a ring at the bottom, fastened into a loop around one part of the line only (see Fig. 8, A) and slid up over the float, at the same time tightly holding the other part of the line between the ring and the float (see Fig. 8, B). The hook is joined to a heavy lead sinker (see Fig. 9, X) which acts as a pulley,

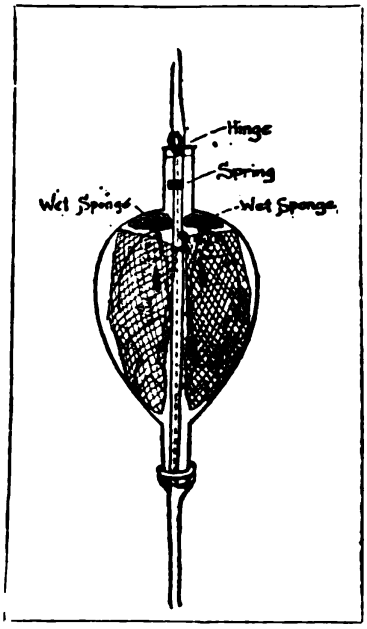


FIG. 6.

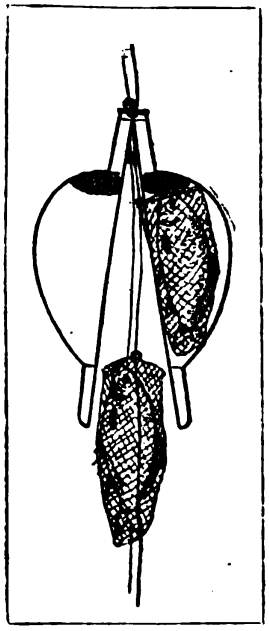


FIG. 7.

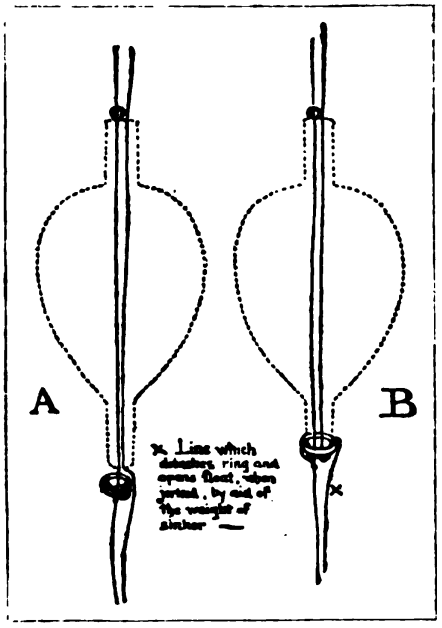


FIG. 8.

ready for production at the desired moment, whilst Fig. 7 clearly shows the first fish sliding down the line to the hook (here, also, it will be noticed that the float is made in halves and hinged at the top). Each fish is suspended in a very fine network bag, of a similar colour to the fish, quite imperceptible to the audience—these bags have a split or spring ring at the top, which enables it to freely slide

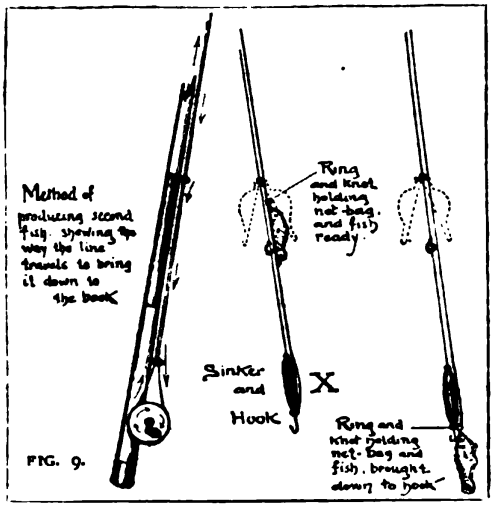


FIG. 9.

ORIENTAL MAGIC—FISHING IN MID-AIR.

and keeps the line straight when it is being revolved for the production of the second fish. This fish being held in position on the line by the ring of its bag being fastened into a knot does not slide down the line as the first does, but is brought to the hook, line and all, by smartly turning the wheel on the end of the rod, around which a part of the line is wound, as with an ordinary fishing-rod. This

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action turns the line completely, lengthening the part with the fish attached and shortening the other part (see Fig. 9), bringing, of course, the ring and knot, from which the second fish is suspended, down to the hook, thus producing fish No. 2. Both the fish are worked from one side of the line only. By jerking the line up smartly, the weight of the sinker pulls the ring from around the bottom of the float (altering it from B to A, Fig. 8), which opens simultaneously by the aid of a small spring at top (Fig. 7) inside, allowing the fish to slide down the line to the hook so quickly that it is impossible for any onlooker to see where it came from. This is all done while the line is swaying to and fro, adding to the deception and heightening the illusionary effect. The moment the fish is "caught" the line is swayed back into the performer's left hand and caught by the float, which is immediately closed by replacing the ring



FIG. 10.—PRODUCTION OF A LARGE FRENCH POODLE.

tightly around the bottom of it, whilst the other hand places the rod under the left arm. These actions are so natural that the closing of the float is quite unperceived by the audience. Both hands are now free to "unhook" the fish, which is shown for a second or two wriggling for freedom; it is then dropped into the bowl of water out of the net, which is placed in the performer's pocket while all eyes are fixed on the fish. Gold fish can be kept out of water four or five minutes without harm, but must have moisture, which is provided by two small sponges in the top of the float—one at the mouth of each fish. In fact, in a wet handkerchief they are often taken from London many miles into the country by purchasers. This is presented as being the most humane method of performing this most marvellous illusion.

The performer now retires for a few moments while his assistant prepares the stage for the next part of his performance. He clears away all paraphernalia connected with the last trick and places a large Oriental rug upon the centre of the stage to dispel the idea of any traps being used in the series of mysterious productions to which the magician next proceeds. When all is ready the performer walks in very slowly from an entrance arranged in the back scene, uttering peculiar Chinese incantations until reaching the centre of the rug, where he stands. He takes a handsome Chinese silk rug, waves it about, showing all sides, and finally lowers one edge to the ground, steps back a pace, and lifts the rug again, disclosing a number of live ducks, fowls, rabbits, pigeons, etc., their appearance causing



FIG. 11.—PRODUCTION OF A LIVE PICCANINNY.

quite an ovation. The performer again retires, while the assistant again prepares the stage and places another rug upon the one already in the centre of the stage. All being once more ready, the performer again walks on in the same manner and goes through exactly the same performance; but upon raising his silk rug this time discloses a large French poodle. After a third retirement the performer again comes on, and this time produces from his silk rug a live piccaninny, who struts about to the strains of a "Coon Walk," amidst a *furore* of applause. (Figs. 10 and 11).

It will be observed that the performer retires after each production, ostensibly to allow the assistant to clear up, but in reality

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to prepare himself for the next trick. His costume is of silk, and the kilted skirt contains many yards of fulness, which admits of much being concealed beneath it without in any way appearing bulky. At the production of the birds, etc., and also of the dog, a bowl is also produced, which contained them and held them snugly during their concealment. This bowl is suspended by means of straps attached to a waistbelt, worn by the performer under his costume—each strap has a hook upon the lower end of it which is hitched under a ring-edge on the bowl, and at the moment for production, when the silk rug is covering the performer from his feet to his waist, he stoops until the bowl reaches the ground and the hooks drop out of the ring-edge by their own weight. He then stands upright, leaving, of course, the bowl and its contents upon the stage, steps back over it, and draws away the rug, displaying the animals, which, by this time, are running in every direction, covering, apparently, much of the stage. The dog is produced in exactly the same manner, placed in concealment during the performer's second retirement (Fig. 12). The animals are trained to keep still and quiet until the bowl is released. The piccaninny (sometimes there are two, produced one at a time without the performer leaving the stage)—is placed in position behind the performer under his costume during his third retirement, and hangs on to rings specially placed in the performer's waistbelt, his feet resting upon the straps, which are now hooked together (Fig. 13). When the performer stoops, the "little darkie" steps out between the performer's legs and stands behind the silk rug. These remarkable illusions, although surprising in effect, are all performed by beautifully simple methods, which are clearly described in the accompanying illustrations.



FIG. 12 AND FIG. 13.—METHODS OF CONCEALING THE DOG AND THE PICCANINNY.

The following illusions are all of the highest order and the outcome of much ingenuity. They are being presented with great success by leading professors of magic. The illusion of "levitation"—raising a person and leaving him suspended in mid-air without any apparent means of support—is one of the most marvellous ever invented, seemingly defying all laws of gravitation. An assistant is introduced, laid upon an ottoman, and then sent off into a hypnotic trance. The performer takes an ordinary fan and fans the body while it rises slowly about four feet in the air, where it mysteriously remains for any length of time desired (Fig. 14). A large solid steel hoop is then given for examination, and after the audience is satisfied as to its genuineness it is passed over the body from head to feet, behind the body and over it again, at once

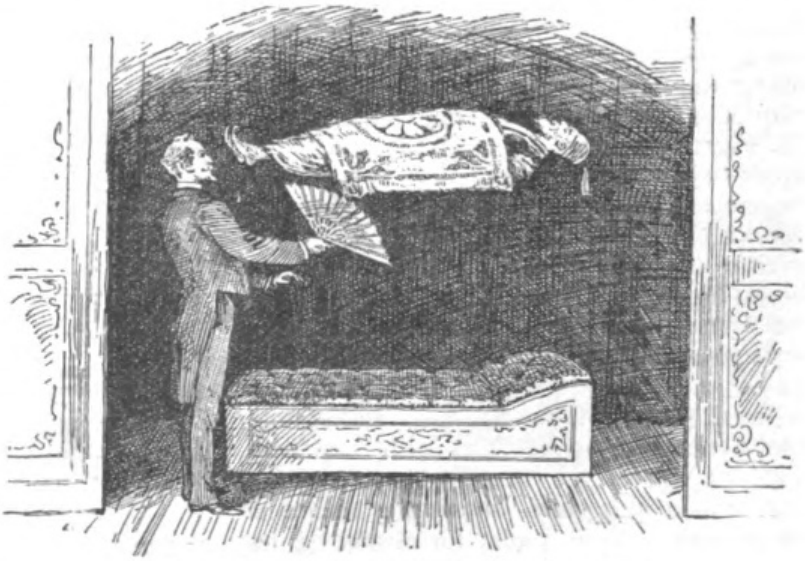


FIG. 14.—THE CELEBRATED "LEVITATION" MYSTERY.

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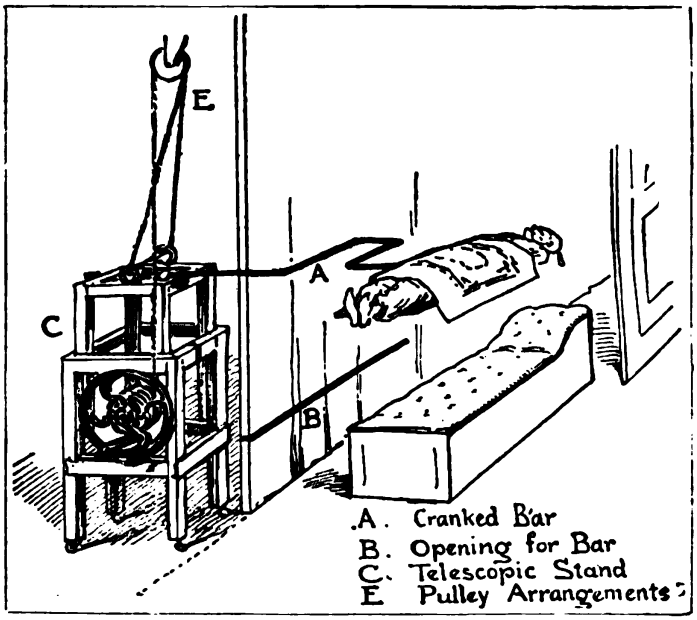


FIG. 15.—"LEVITATION"—HOW THE BODY IS RAISED.

dispelling the idea of wires or any other tangible support being used, the body, as it were, journeying through the hoop each time. The suspended assistant is now fanned from above and gently descends to the ottoman as slowly and gracefully as he rose from it. He is then brought back to his normal state out of the trance, and walks off none the worse for his aerial pose.

This seeming impossibility is performed by the aid of a cranked bar (Fig. 15 and A Fig. 16) and a pulley to raise it, the bar being pushed through from the back at the moment when the performer is "hypnotizing" the subject, and in the act of placing a light covering over him he guides a clamp (B, Fig. 16) and fixes it to the top of the ottoman upon which the subject rests, and which rises, unseen, with him, the edges being obscured by the covering. The bar being the same colour as the back scene cannot be noticed, and resting upon a stand (C, Figs. 15 and 16) behind the scenes the same height as the ottoman it is kept firm by the aid of strong supports. Being also double the width (D, Fig 16) at this part greater leverage is obtained to hold the board upon which the subject rests secure from tilting either way. By means of a pulley arrangement (E, Fig. 15) the assistant behind raises and lowers the body, looking through a small hole in the scenes and timing the performer's movements with exactness. Fig. 14 shows the illusion as it appears. Fig. 15—a side view—shows the means of suspension and the pulley for raising the bar and telescopic stand. Fig. 16 almost explains itself. It shows the method of passing the ring over the body. By putting it on at (1) and passing it as far as the centre of the bar (A) it can be brought around and off the body at (2), apparently having passed right over it, although not free of the crank; it is then passed behind the body as far as (3), when it can be again placed over the end (1) and drawn across once more, this time being, of course, quite free, having made an apparent circle right around and across the body. It seems evident to the audience that the subject is so raised and suspended by the performer's magic power alone. The sleeping subject is now lowered, and in the act of being "dehypnotized" the performer slips the crank off, which is immediately drawn in from behind, the subject and performer sharing the applause. It is almost needless to explain that the "hypnotism" is mere sham to heighten the effect and admit of an excuse to stoop in order to fix the cranked bar.

"Vanity Fair" is an illusion so called from the natural admiration of a lady's reflection of her beautiful self in a mirror. This illusion is the outcome of great ingenuity, and is very bewildering from the fact that it is impossible to have any trap-door in a mirror without its being dangerously noticeable, even to the most unobservant eye. A large mirror in a fancy frame, draped each side, and raised about three feet from the ground, is shown back and front, then placed in the centre of the stage; a glass shelf is placed across rests which are about a foot from the bottom of the mirror, upon which a lady is placed facing the audience; but she naturally turns round and faces the

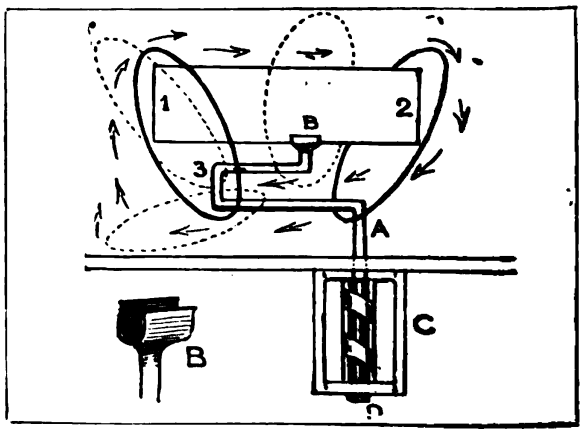


FIG. 16.—"LEVITATION"—HOW THE HOOP IS PASSED OVER THE BODY.

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FIG. 17.—"VANITY FAIR."

glass to admire her pretty reflection (Fig. 17). She is turned again towards the audience by the performer, when vanity causes her to turn once more and take admiring glances in the glass. The performer now being annoyed at her persistent rudeness commands her to go. But, no—a pretty lady and a good looking-glass are not so quickly separated. He then proceeds to cover her with a threefold screen, by placing it, box-shape, in front of her upon the shelf, leaving a foot of the mirror still in view on either side of it. He then fires a pistol and immediately removes the screen, when it is seen that the lady has completely vanished. The mirror is then turned around on casters to show she is not hidden at the back. The question is almost audible: "Where can she be?" The answer is quickly forthcoming by the lady's reappearance from amongst the audience.

The secret of this is as follows: The part of the mirror seen below the shelf is really only a piece a foot deep (the top concealed by the cross-pieces against it), and is in front of the mirror proper, which runs down behind it and contains a square opening in the centre of that part; the fancy panel at the top allows the mirror to be drawn up into it, similar to opening a window, until the opening at the bottom reaches the top of the shelf, and through this the lady escapes when covered by the screen. The mirror seen each side of the screen cannot be noticed moving upwards, and such a proceeding not being conceived by the audience, the impossibility of the lady vanishing through a solid mirror seems more certain in their minds. The drawings serve further to clear up the mystery. Fig. 17 shows the mirror with the lady lost in admiration. Fig. 18 shows the method of escape with the opening raised to the shelf. Fig. 19 shows the astonishing effect produced in a few seconds. Directly the screen is placed in front of the lady an assistant behind raises the mirror by means of a wire to the level of the shelf, pushing a plank through a trap opening in the scene; the lady quickly gets through the opening on to the plank, which with her is drawn back through the scene—the mirror is dropped to its original place, the trap in the scene is closed while the lady runs round to the body of the hall, and on removal of the screen nothing of a suspicious nature can be seen. The surprise becomes even greater when the mirror is turned round and the lady reappears from amongst the audience.

I shall now describe the mystery known as "The Invisible Flight."

A pedestal about seven feet high is seen in the centre of the stage. The performer introduces a liveried assistant and entirely envelops him in a black cloak and hood, and puts a pistol in his right hand. He then fetches a ladder, places it against the pedestal, walks up, and steps from it on to the top of the pedestal, behind a curtain, which is hung in front, just reaching to his feet. The assistant puts the ladder back and fires the pistol, when immediately the curtain rises and a great surprise meets the gaze of the audience, for there on the pedestal, where the performer stepped only a moment previously, stands the liveried servant; but the climax is reached when the supposed assistant pulls off the cloak and



FIG. 18.—"VANITY FAIR"—THE METHOD OF ESCAPE.

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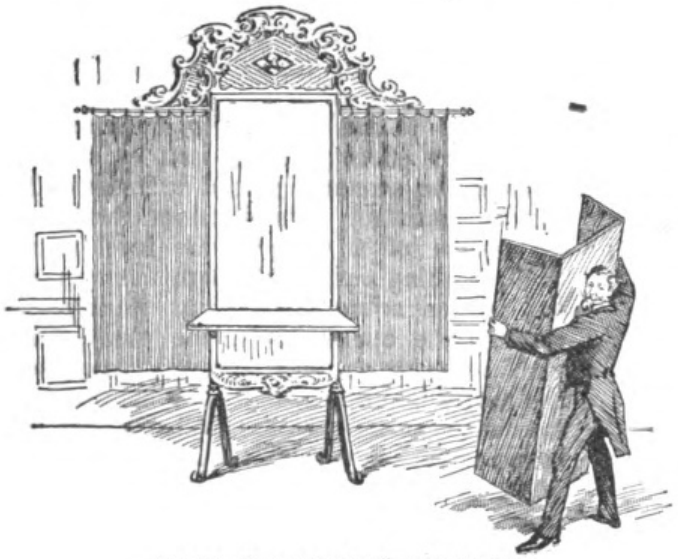


FIG. 19.—"VANITY FAIR"—THE EFFECT.

hood, showing him to be none other than the performer himself.

To perform this illusion it is necessary to have two assistants as near alike as possible and of a similar stature to the performer himself, the rest being quite simple but requiring much exactness in execution. The performer cloaks assistant No. 1 (Fig. 20) and hands him the pistol, then goes to fetch the ladder, part of which is showing between the wings, the other part being held by assistant No. 2, who is made up to look, at a quick glance, exactly like the performer. The performer catches hold of the ladder and steps between the wings, leaving one leg showing; the assistant (No. 2) steps out backwards with the ladder, covering the performer momentarily, who then steps right in between the wings (Fig. 20). The natural movement of the assistant in stepping back at the right moment looks as if it is still the performer; indeed, he is never suspected to be otherwise. Assistant No. 2 places the ladder against the pedestal, walks up, and, stepping behind the curtain, unhooks a duplicate livery from it, quickly puts it on, pockets wig and moustache, or any other make-up which went to match the magician's appearance, and stands ready for the curtain to be raised, at the sound of the pistol, by a string leading inside to one of the stage hands. During this time assistant No. 1 has taken the ladder back to its original place, and the performer, who has meanwhile quickly donned a cloak and hood exactly as worn by assistant No. 1, reverses his previous action, stepping back with a pistol in his right hand (Fig. 21), this again being so natural as not to excite suspicion. He then fires, when assistant No. 2 is seen upon the pedestal, believed by the audience to be assistant No. 1, the idea of a duplicate never occurring to them, as they have not seen the change take place. The performer then takes off his cloak and hood, bowing smilingly to the bewildered audience.

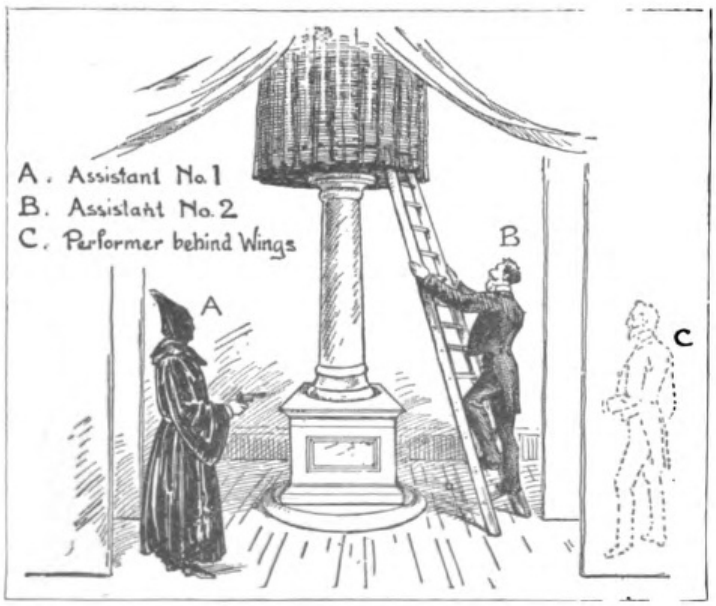


FIG. 20.—"THE INVISIBLE FLIGHT."



FIG. 21.—"THE INVISIBLE FLIGHT."

(*To be continued.*)

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What Came to the Man Who Waited.

BEING THE STORY OF A STRANGE PATIENT.

By Geo. Manville Fenn.

"HERE, try one of these; they're real good—splendid."

Thomas Lawrence, doctor, took the cigar offered to him, turned it over in his fingers, smelt it, and trifled with it in a peculiar way.

"Well, why don't you light up?" said the giver.

"Because I was thinking, old chap."

"Bother thinking! Here I came in for a quiet hour's smoke and change outside the bird-cage, and instead of playing the cheery host you have been all in the doldrums. What's the matter with you? What are you thinking about?"

"I was thinking it is a nice thing for you: house rent free, splendid screw, no anxieties, and always plenty of patients, while here have I been two years in this wretched road since I planked down nearly every sovereign I possessed to buy this 'eligible practice,' as the agent called it; and all the practice I've got has been the practice of patience."

"Bah! The old game! What a fellow you are to grumble! It will all come in good time."

"It's very well for you to talk, with no money worries. Here, take the weed back. I can't afford to smoke cigars like that."

"Get out! I can't either. I dare say those cigars cost ninepence apiece—perhaps a shilling. One of my patients gave me a dozen of them."

"One of your patients! A gaol-bird? Then, John Edwardes, Esq., M.D., and resident surgeon of His Majesty's gaol, I am poor, but honest. I refuse to smoke stolen goods."

"Ha, ha!" laughed the friend addressed. "What a rum chap you are, Tommy! And so you always were, from a schoolboy."

"And what a lucky one you always were, Jack!"

"Luck? Pretty luck! Change with you to-morrow with pleasure."

"You wouldn't."

"I would, honour bright. I get sick of it. It gives me the blues, old man, horribly. Shut up in that doleful place with all those poor beggars, pitying some of them and feeling as if I should like to poison the others—the miching, malingering ruffians who would think nothing of stopping one's breath if they dared. My dear old boy, there's a deal more skim milk than cream in a gaol surgeon's work. There, light up, old chap. Those cigars were given me by a literary swell, a first-class misdemeanant, who is 'in' for telling the truth in his newspaper about a blackguard. The jury said it was a libel, and he is having a nice old time—meals sent in from outside, and somebody seems to wink at his wine. He isn't a bad fellow at all. Go on: light up."

The two friends sat smoking for a few minutes, and then the gaol surgeon continued:—

"Well, this is rum! When you told me you had bought the practice and were going to be only a few hundred yards away from me, I rejoiced like a good man and true, for I said, 'I shall have dear old Tom at work close by, and we shall be as good friends as ever, for our practices will never clash, and medical jealousy, which is an abominable thing, will be an unknown quantity.' How do you like that cigar?"

"Splendid, old man," was the reply. "There, don't take any notice of my grumpiness. I can't help being hipped sometimes, for it is desolate work waiting for a start."

"Yes, it is, old chap, I know; but still, wait. This district is growing tremendously. Old Jerry, the doctor's friend, is running up streets and squares wholesale, and one of these days the population will be dense and you will have more than you can do without an assistant."

"Yes, I know all that, Jack," said the doctor, sadly; "but while the grass is growing, the steed—you know."

"My dear old fellow," cried the other, "you don't mean—— Here, I say, Tom! Don't ride the high horse! Speak out honestly. If fifty or a hundred would be of service to you, speak out like my old chum."

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"No, no, Jack! No, no! Really, it isn't so bad as that."

"Honour bright?"

"Honour bright," said the other. "If it were I would pitch the whole thing up and start afresh."

"And throw away all you have sunk here!



"NO, NO, JACK! NO, NO! REALLY, IT ISN'T SO BAD AS THAT."

Don't be a fool! I am saving money, for I have no temptation to spend it, and if you, my near neighbour, don't come to me to ask for a lift over the stile, we are no longer friends. Here, by Jingo, my time's up! I have two or three of my dicky-birds to see to-night, and—yes, I think I will have one more tot before I go. That's uncommonly good whisky."

"Excellent. It is part of that bottle you sent me."

"Ah, you shouldn't interrupt. I thought there was a twang in it that I didn't like. Here, good-night, old chap. I'll come again soon and cheer you up. I dare say when I do you will wish me at Jericho, for you will be in tow with that customary, wealthy old lady—first-class patient, with nothing the matter with her. Cheer up! It will all come right. Here, take a couple more of these cigars."

"No, no."

"You shall. I won't come again if you don't."

Thomas Lawrence, M.D., went to the door with his old schoolfellow and then down to the gate, over which the typical doctor's lamp was burning brightly, showing a couple of red danger signals—up and down the main road.

Then, as his friend's steps died away, he turned, looked up at the well-kept, rather expensive house, with its annexe used as a surgery, sighed, went up the steps to the front door, closed it after him, and turned off to go down into the surgery.

"I've left that gas burning all the time he's been here," he said to himself, "and for nothing. My word, how the expenses do run up!"

He entered the well-furnished surgery, and then passed into the consulting-room, where the gas was also burning brightly; but instead of turning it out he took down his day-book, seated himself at the table, and began to turn over the leaves and calculate what his takings had been for the last six months.

"Good old chap," he said, with a groan; "he would always share his last penny with one, but I won't take it. I'll hold out another month, and then—give it up as a bad job, for there's nothing to be done here, and——what the deuce is that?"

"That" was the night bell ringing violently, and hurrying out half-way across the surgery, and walking slowly and professionally the other half, he quietly opened the door, to find himself face to face with a group of three: a fashionably-dressed lady, whose light dust-cloak was torn from neck to

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hem, feathered hat slightly awry, and a look of agony and fear upon a very charming face, as she held up a heavy-countenanced, athletic-looking young man in a great pale drab overcoat with large pearl buttons, and Belcher handkerchief. His legs were clothed in a rug, and a golf cap was drawn right down over his brows, almost touching a bleeding cut passing from below the eye nearly to the angle of his jaw, while his closely-shaven face was smeared, like the collar of his coat, with blood and dust.

He seemed to be in a state of collapse, hanging forward with half-closed eyes, and kept from falling on his other side by a smartly-dressed groom, who supported his master with his left hand while he carried a large brown Gladstone bag in his right.

"Are you the doctor?" came in a sweet, silvery voice, half choked by the agitation of its owner.

"Yes. What is it — an accident?" was the questioning reply.

"Oh, yes! Quick — quick! Pray help! I'm afraid he's killed. That dreadful mare — went down! He would drive so fast. Pray help! A chair—a couch! Oh, Philip, Philip, darling!" was sobbed. "Pray speak! Are you very, very bad?"

"Don't talk to him, madam," said the doctor—the cool, professional business man at once. "Here, you"—to the groom—"this way. Can he walk?"



"'ALLOW ME TO COME, MADAM,' SAID THE DOCTOR."

"No, no; if I let go he'll fall. A chair—a couch! Pray, pray!"

"Yes, yes, madam; but be cool! Now then."

With a little assistance from the doctor the patient was half carried, half led through the surgery into the consulting-room and lowered down upon the operating couch, beside which the groom dropped the Gladstone bag, and then stood holding the rug closely about his master, before wiping his dusty, perspiring face.

"Allow me to come, madam," said the doctor, for the sobbing lady had crouched upon her knees beside the injured man, embracing him tightly, and most thoroughly getting in the would-be operator's way.

"Don't be alarmed, madam; the cut seems to be superficial, and I hope he is only stunned."

"Oh, no, he's dreadfully bad!" sobbed the lady, and the doctor, in spite of his annoyance, could not help feeling something like envy of the big, hulking athlete upon whom so much tender affection was lavished by one who seemed to grow more charming at every word.

"But you must let me come. Unless I examine where he is injured I am quite in the dark."

"Oh, pray don't touch him!" cried the lady, imploringly. "We were driving back from Henley. He had been rowing, and

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the mare was frightened by one of those dreadful trams. We were all thrown out, and Philip came down a frightful crash upon the pavement! Oh, doctor, doctor, the sticking-plaster! See how he bleeds! Pray give him something to take at once!"

"Yes, yes, yes, my dear madam! Believe me, I appreciate your anxiety; but, you see, you are hindering. This hysterical display is out of place. If you would only be calm and trust to me! You see, I must remove his coat and this wrapper, and——"

"No, no, no! Don't! Pray don't!" half shrieked the lady. "He's broken somewhere—I am sure he is! Don't—pray don't touch him yet!"

"But really, my dear madam——" began the doctor, but his words were checked by a heavy groan from the patient.

"Beg pardon, sir," said the groom; "but I think master's only stunned. The missus is a bit skeered, you see. If I might say so, if you'd give him a glass of water with a touch of something in it, and let him lie still a bit, I believe he'd soon come round."

"Yes, yes, yes, James," cried the lady. "Yes, doctor; pray, doctor! I implore you. Give him something and let him rest awhile."

"Yes, sir, that would be right," chimed in the groom; "and I suppose you don't want me here?"

"Well, I don't know, my man, yet. Why?"

"Because there's the mare, sir. Couple of chaps holding of her that don't understand her. I am afraid there's a sharp broke, and if they don't mind she'll be kicking the trap into splinters, and then master'll blame me."

"Be off, then," said the doctor, sharply, as he stood examining his patient's face critically, and trying to feel his pulse, the approach he made being resented by the lady with a cry of alarm.

"My dear madam," cried the doctor, impatiently, "how can I help my patient if you prevent me at every turn?"

"Oh, I won't, doctor—I won't!" sobbed the lady, as the outer door was closed and they were alone. "Pray have some pity on me. I am hurt, too—not much; but I am so dreadfully alarmed. Pray, pray give him something to revive him!"

"Very well, I will, then, if you can be more patient afterwards. Yes, his pulse seems all right," continued the doctor, as in obedience to the request he poured a portion of a powerful stimulant into a glass, added water, and went down on one knee upon the opposite side of the couch, bending over with the intention of slightly raising his patient's head and holding the glass to his lips.

"No, no, doctor; don't touch him!" cried the lady. "I daren't let you move him. Let me—let me!" and she took the glass from the hand that held it and passed her arm beneath the injured man's neck.

"But you had better let me take off this thick wrap," said the doctor, earnestly.

"No, no! Pray don't! Not yet. Philip, dearest," she continued, in a gentle, cooing voice, "try if you can raise your head a little while I hold the glass to your lips. There, you see," she whispered, excitedly, "he heard me, and he is coming round. Now, dearest, do, pray, pray try. If you only knew, my darling, how I am praying to hear you speak! Yes, that's right; a drop at a time, dear. Yes, doctor, he has swallowed a little."

His affectionate nurse was quite right, for the patient had gulped down a portion of the draught, and uttered a hoarse ejaculation which made his attendant start.

"What's that?" said the doctor, sharply.

"I—I—I—I——" stammered the lady. "I am afraid it was a wicked word. Was the brandy too strong?"

The doctor laughed.

"My dear madam, no," he said; "it was not brandy, but ammonia, and not very palatable, of course. There, I don't think anything is broken, and, so far, you don't seem to have much cause for alarm."

"Do you think not, doctor? Oh, Philip, dear, pray, pray try and swallow some more! It is to do you good."

The patient uttered a sound that seemed to be a cross between a groan and a growl, and let his head sink back upon the pillow of the couch.

"Where am I?" he said, hoarsely.

"Here, dearest, at the doctor's, and I am with you. Do you think you could go to sleep for a little while?"

There was another faint groan and a movement as if the sufferer sought for rest.

"There, doctor," cried the lady, excitedly; "you see he was coming to! If you will only let him be for about an hour before you attempt any examination, and then—— Oh!" she cried, with a shriek, as she flung both her arms tightly round the patient's neck and turned her face fiercely towards the door, for at that moment there was another sharp ring at the surgery bell, and the deep muttering of voices was heard at the door.

"My dear madam," said the doctor,

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"don't be alarmed. I am wanted for some patient. That is all."

"Oh, no, no, no!" she wailed. "They've come—they've come to fetch him, to tear him away from me—and they shall not!" she cried fiercely, her eyes flashing with the angry look of a woman at bay.

"To fetch him?" said the doctor, wonderingly. "To fetch whom?"

"Yes—I—that is——oh, Philip, what am I saying? I thought—I believed, doctor, they were coming to take him to the hospital, and I couldn't let him go there. He is not so bad as that."

"My dear madam, no," said the doctor. "There, drink a little of that *sal volatile* in the glass. Yes, coming, coming!" he added, petulantly, as the bell rang again—furiously. "Excuse me, madam; I will be back directly," and he hurried into the surgery, drawing the door to after him before answering the summons.

He started in wonder, for it seemed to be raining accidents that night, and he found himself faced by half-a-dozen uniformed warders of the great neighbouring prison, who were bearing one of their comrades between them.

"Sorry to trouble you, sir," said the one who seemed to be the leader; "one of our mates. Poor chap, he's pumped out. We stumbled upon him in the road at the back. Dead beat, I am afraid. We have had a sharp chase."

"Bring him in," said the doctor. "Sharp chase! What do you mean?" he continued, as the insensible warder was brought in and laid back in a chair.

"Oh, one of our birds got out of the cage, sir, and we were hunting him down. Our mate here seems to have put too much steam on. What is it—heart?"

"Heart, man! No," said the doctor, as he made a hurried examination. "The man's forehead is contused."

"Yes, sir; he seems to have fainted and pitched head forward against the kerb. We found him in the gutter."

"But he is bleeding behind the ear," said the doctor. "He's had a blow. Look: his coat's torn open."

"Yes, sir. We did that to give him air; at least, one of us did."

"Yes," said the doctor; "but the shirt-collar's ripped off, and here are the marks of fingers in his throat."

"By George!" cried the warder. "Then Joe ran him down, lads. Poor old man! He can't be far away. Here, you, Smithers, as soon as the doctor's done what he wants to do, get a cab and take the poor chap back to the office—or had I better send for the ambulance, sir?"

"Better lose no time," said the doctor. "I'll bandage his injury, and you can take him to your infirmary at once."

"Right you are, sir. Now, Smithers, you have your orders. Come on, my lads. He can't have got far. We must take up the trail from where we found poor Joe."

The speaker led his men out into the road, where they started off at the double, while the doctor, forgetting his other patient for the moment, busied himself with scissors, water, sponge, and strapping before fitting on a bandage, during which time the new patient never stirred.

"Got it rather hot, hasn't he, sir?" said



"HE FOUND HIMSELF FACE TO FACE WITH HIS ATTRACTIVE VISITOR."

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his fellow, who had been helping intelligently, as one accustomed to "first aid."

"Yes," said the doctor, quietly. "He's had a very ugly blow."

"Not a fracture, sir?"

"I can't say yet. Dr. Edwardes will see to that."

"What's it to be, sir, ambulance or cab?"

"The distance is very short," replied the doctor, "and while you are fetching the ambulance you could get him to the infirmary. Call a cab at once."

The man hurried out, and after giving a few finishing touches to his task the doctor left his insensible patient and made for the consulting-room door, where, to his surprise as he threw it open, he found himself face to face with his attractive visitor, who with flashing eyes extended her left hand to keep him back, holding her right hidden in the folds of her long dust-cloak.

"Are they gone?" she said, excitedly.

"Yes; there has been another accident," replied the doctor; and his visitor started, and shrank back as she caught a glimpse of the injured warder.

"Is he much hurt?" she said, in a low voice.

"Rather badly, I'm afraid. He will be taken away directly."

"I—I couldn't help hearing," continued his visitor. "It is very horrible."

"Doctors have plenty of horrors," said Lawrence, quietly. "There; I am at liberty now to see to your—husband," he continued, tentatively. "How does he seem?"

"Oh, better! Much better," was the reply, and the speaker interposed between them. "He's asleep. Don't wake him. He spoke to me a little while ago. I am sure that he will be better when he has had more rest. Please don't disturb him now."

"Very well; if you wish it," said the doctor; "but I feel as though I ought to make a thorough examination."

"But we shall pay you all the same, doctor," cried the lady, hastily. "I felt that I couldn't bear for you to touch him. I was afraid of its proving something dreadful. But," she added, hysterically, "I—I don't think there is any danger now."

"Judging from the calm way in which he is lying I don't think there was anything serious from the first; but what have you been doing in my absence?"

"I—I only sponged the cut on his poor cheek. It isn't deep."

"Had I not better apply some strapping to it?" said the doctor.

"Well, perhaps it would be better, if you could do it without waking him."

"I'll try," said the doctor, and he busied himself for a few minutes, till a ring announced the return of the warder, when his attention was taken up for a short time in superintending the removal of his second patient to the waiting cab.

This done, he stood watching for a few moments before turning to close the door; but just then the groom came up hurriedly.

"How's the guv'nor, sir?" he asked.

"Oh, there's not much the matter, my man," was the reply. "How are the horse and trap?"

"Bit off the near fore-leg, sir, and one sharp broke; but I've got that tied up, and it will be all right now, sir, when the guv'nor can go. Have you done with him, sir?"

"Well, I don't know yet, my man. Come in and let's see how he is."

The doctor led the way through the surgery, to find his patient lying back, apparently sleeping; and the lady's manner seemed entirely changed, as she held up one hand.

"Don't disturb him," she whispered. "Your master's in a nice sleep, James."

"Won't be fit to come away to-night, I suppose, ma'am?" said the man, respectfully.

"Oh, I hope so, James," was the reply; and the lady looked inquiringly at the doctor, who slightly shrugged his shoulders as he replied:—

"Well, I am hardly in a position to give an opinion; but, to speak plainly, I think my patient was more frightened than hurt."

"Oh, doctor!" cried the lady, reproachfully; and she pointed to the plastered face. "How can you say that!"

"You must take it as congratulation, madam," was the reply; "but I should advise that your——" He paused.

"My husband," said the lady, with dignity.

"Should pass the night where he is."

"Oh, impossible, doctor! They will be in such alarm at home. As soon as he wakes up and the dog-cart is fit for use, I think we will go, even if James has to lead the mare."

As the lady spoke the doctor's eyes were busily occupied in scanning the patient, and he noted now that the wife had turned back the great overcoat, that the rug was on the floor, and the golf cap lying on the table. And now for the first time the doctor was able to see that his patient was evidently a thick-set, well-built man of about thirty, one whose dress carried out a suggestion first given by the sporting-cut driving-coat, for everything about him told of the Turf and a

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general addiction to outdoor life. His natty tie was secured by a gold-mounted fox-tush pin, the cross of his heavy gold Breguet chain was formed of a hound's head and two hunting-crops crossed, while on the hands, one of which still bled a little at the knuckles, he wore a big diamond ring and a heavy signet engraved with a crest. He was evidently well-to-do in the world, and looked as if he had lately been in training for some sporting event.

All at once, as the doctor was scanning him intently, he became aware of a faint glint coming from one slightly opened eye. The next moment both eyes were opened widely in a heavy stare, and in a hoarse, gruff voice there came the fiercely uttered question:—

"Who are you?"

"Oh, Philip, dear!" cried the lady, reproachfully. "Pray don't speak like that! It is the doctor — Doctor —— Doctor——?"

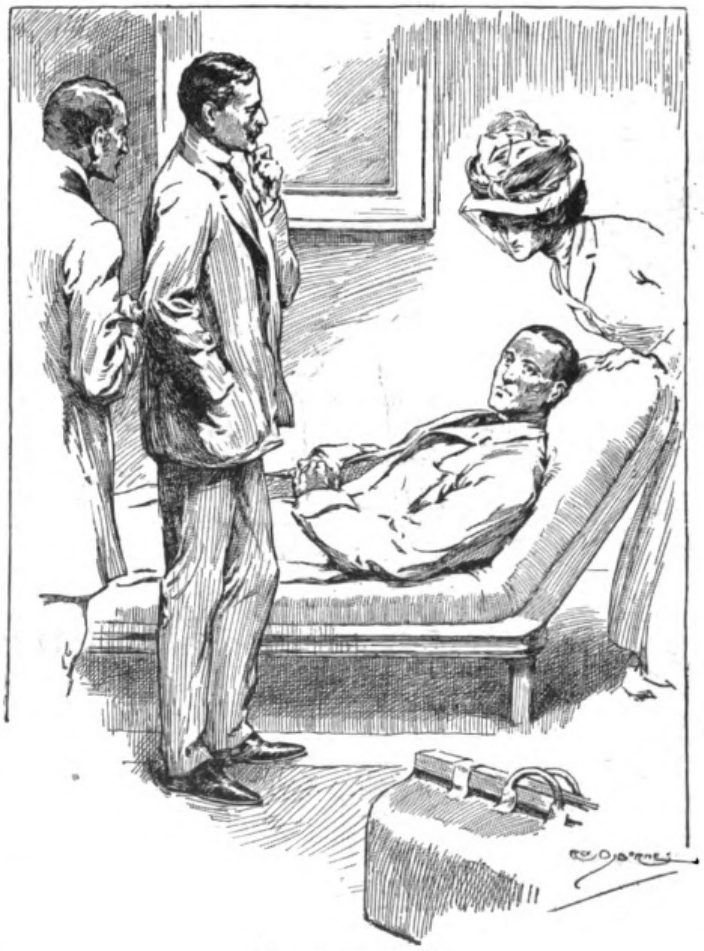
"Lawrence," said the owner of the name, quietly. "How do you feel now, sir?"

"How do I feel?" said the patient, in a puzzled way. "Here, what's the matter? Why am I here?"

"Don't trouble about it now, dear," said his wife, tenderly, nestling her hands in his breast, as he suddenly started up. "You don't understand. The mare stumbled. She was startled by a tram-car. We were all thrown out and you were stunned."

"It was an accident, then, and I was brought on here?"

"Yes, dear; but don't excite yourself, pray!"



"WHO ARE YOU?"

"Not going to, Jenny. Anything broken, doctor?"

"I think not, sir. Try if you can stand."

"Oh, don't move, pray! Not yet!" cried the lady, excitedly.

"Don't you be in a fuss, Jenny," said the patient, throwing his legs off the couch. "I'm not going to die yet. Legs all right —arms the same. I say, my face smarts horribly," he cried, as he clapped his hand to his cheek. Why, doctor, you've made a nice mess of me here. Is that all that's the matter with me?"

"Fortunately, yes, sir."

"All right, then," cried the patient, bluffly. "What's to pay?"

The doctor shrugged his shoulders, glanced at his visitors and their groom, and then named a very moderate fee.

"Thank you, doctor," said his patient "Pay him, Jenny: I'll pay you again Here, you, Jem, what about the trap?"

"It's all right, sir; chap holding her round the corner. Would you like me to drive?"

"Yes, James, do, please. I shall not be happy, Philip, dear, if you attempt to drive to-night."

"All right, pet. Here, help me on with my handkerchief; one of my arms is a bit stiff. Thanks. That's right. Had a bit of an escape, doctor, eh?"

"A very narrow one, I think, sir." And the doctor looked at his visitor closely.

"Much nearer than you think, Philip, dear," said the lady, quickly. "Oh, thank you, doctor, so much for your great kindness and attention," and the doctor thrilled at the

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pressure of a soft, white hand, as a neatly folded piece of paper was slipped into his palm. "Don't forget the portmanteau, James."

"Got it, ma'am," replied the groom. "Shall I bring the trap round to the door?"

"Yes, of course, and you'll want something to give the man who held the mare."

"Yes, ma'am—thank you, ma'am."

And the next minute the groom, laden with bag and rug, had gone.

"What are you looking at, doctor?" said the patient, sharply.

"You, sir."

"What for?" and there was something almost fierce in the question.

"I was thinking you seemed perfectly right, but that I might prescribe something to pull you together."

"Doctors' stuff! Bah!"

"No; a little B. and S."

"To be sure! Here, I'll come to you again"

Five minutes later the doctor was alone, thinking about his patient.

"What a pity it seems that such a sweet, refined-looking woman should take to such a brute as that!" he mused. "Yes, it is all nature. The weak female falls to the strong man. Humph!—a fiver! What a stroke of luck! I should like such a patient every—— What the deuce is that?"

He stooped down quickly and picked up a small, beautifully-made revolver, whose ivory butt just peeped out from beneath the couch.

"A lady's weapon," he muttered. And, holding it to the light, he read upon a little gold plate:—

"*Phil to Jen.*"

"H'm! Sporting man. No accounting for taste—nor Americans neither."

Dr. Lawrence slept well that night, and the next morning in good time he had a fresh call from his old friend.

"Thought I'd just drop in on you," he said. "High jinks my way last night. One of our pets got away and half killed a warder sent in pursuit, as you know, for they tell me he was brought in here."

"How is he?" said the other, sharply.

"Rather bad. Slight fracture; but I shall pull him round. Come, you had a patient last night, and a safe one, for we shall pay. Good-bye; I am in a hurry."



"'A LADY'S WEAPON,' HE MUTTERED."

Five minutes later Dr. Lawrence sat in his surgery, tapping the table with his finger-nails as he carefully fitted together a puzzle that troubled his brain.

"That's it!" he cried, at last. "The accident was all a sham—got up to cover the escape by those who were waiting for him at an appointed place. But why didn't they drive off at once? Wanted a place for him to change his clothes—he couldn't do that in the street with pursuit hot afoot. Now, then, ought I to go and give information at once? No; I may be wrong. I wish I had thought of this when Jack was here. I must tell him."

He did tell his friend the next time he came.

"Now, then," he said, in conclusion, "what do you say to it?"

"That I didn't think you could be so easily taken in. I should stick to that revolver, though, as a little memento, Tom."

"But what about the authorities?"

"Oh, that's their business, not ours."

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The Humour of Christmas.

By James Walter Smith.



Mamma: "To-morrow's Christmas Day, Effie, dear, and you will go to church for the first time." (Encouragingly): "There will be beautiful music——"
Effie: "Oh, mummy, dear, may I dance?"
DRAWN BY PHIL MAY. REPRODUCED BY PERMISSION OF THE PROPRIETORS OF "PUNCH."

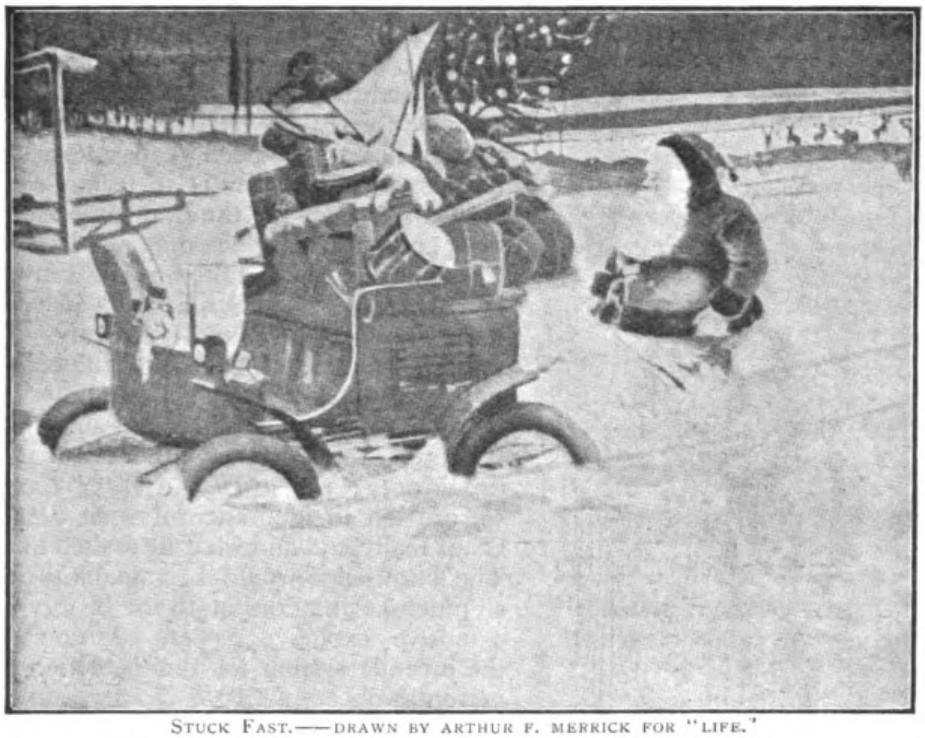
WHEN Effie's mother told her that to-morrow would be Christmas Day, and that Effie was going to church for the first time, where she would hear beautiful music, the little girl cried out, "Oh, mummy, dear, may I dance?" The point of view of Effie is the point of view of untold thousands. We older ones, burdened with the knowledge acquired by years of Christmases, know that Christmas is a religious festival significant with beauty, and some of us are prone to lament, as the Puritans so strenuously lamented, that the fundamental note of the Christmas season seems to be lost. Yet it is not for us to say that the child's point of view is not correct. It makes for happiness, and to be happy in the happiness of others should be the aim of all at Christmas-tide.

The arrival of Santa Claus is so eagerly watched for that we have often wondered why he has never been seen. Possibly because the dustman is in league with Santa, and gets in the way of curious boys and girls. Little Montague, who on Christmas morning told his father that he was awake when Santa Claus arrived, came very near to actual discovery. It was so dark that little Montague could not see Santa, "but when he bumped himself on the wash-stand he said——" "There," replied the father; "that'll do, Monty; run away and play"—and we are left in ignorance of what Santa Claus really said and what he looked like. The knowledge would be valuable—not so much as an addition to the history of explosive expletive as an addition to the juvenile system for the detection of patron saints.



Little Montague: "I was awake when Santa Claus came, dad."
Father: "Were you? And what was he like, eh?"
Little Montague: "Oh, I couldn't see him; it was dark, you know. But when he bumped himself on the wash-stand he said——"
Father (hastily): "There, that'll do, Monty. Run away and play."
DRAWN BY C. E. BROCK. REPRODUCED BY PERMISSION OF THE PROPRIETORS OF "PUNCH."

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STUCK FAST.—DRAWN BY ARTHUR F. MERRICK FOR "LIFE."

That Santa Claus should be so intolerably long in arriving at his destination is not to be wondered at when we remember the difficulties in the way of his progress put there by progress itself. Our merry saint has to keep up with the times, and the most accurate knowledge that we possess of his doings tells us that the reindeer which he used to drive so recklessly over the housetops are now possessions of the past, and that Santa to-day rides *en automobile* through the drifting snows. He runs the risks taken by others who fare forth in winter. He may get locked up in the drifts or he may have a total breakdown, so common to beginners in the new and ever-increasing method of locomotion, but the perils in his path are as nothing.

A traveller such as he is always prepared for shocks. Often when for some reason or other his arrival has been given up as hopeless, and daddy has undertaken, in response to a pressing and unanimous request, to figure as Santa Claus, the unexpected appearance of the saint upon the scene throws things into confusion. Santa himself might well be astonished at such a moment to look upon the results of daddy's attempt at personification. On one such occasion Santa appeared in the room where daddy was making up with a shaving-brush and a hand-mirror. "Great Scot!" cried Santa, "is that me?" and we may imagine that he rapidly departed from the scene with some horror at the recollection of a real monstrosity.

Some justification, however, should be expressed on the paternal behalf, for if no one



PAPA MAKES UP.—Shade of Father Christmas: "Great Scot! Is that supposed to be me?"

DRAWN BY TOM BROWNE FOR "THE KING."

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SANTA CLAUS VISITS THE FREAK MUSEUM.—DRAWN BY C. J. TAYLOR FOR "PUCK."

has ever seen Santa Claus how can anyone tell the way he should be dressed? Although the saint brings with him gifts enough to fill every reasonable want, and would hardly feel at a loss were a hundred thousand stockings hanging before him when he entered the chimney of a well-regulated house, he is compelled to exercise some discretion in the act of distribution. His insight into the consciences of the young tells him unerringly where to place his gifts. Never will a box of paints be found in the stocking of the little fellow who has longed for a box of bricks, and tin soldiers never occupy the place intended for a flaxen-haired doll that moves its eyes. If by any chance the old fellow were to find himself in a museum devoted to freaks, as one of our artists pictures him, he would be equal to the emergency. Santa Claus possesses the discriminative power to please the diverse tastes of such abnormal people.

Once upon a time Santa had experience with a selfish boy who, thinking to get the better of his brothers and sisters, climbed to the roof and there hung, at the top of the chimney, his empty stocking attached to a broom. Expectantly he went to sleep, and in the night the Frost King came, covering the cities and the villages with white and leaving behind a world of trackless snow. When Santa, in his sledge and furs, drew towards the home of the selfish one, he found the stocking filled with ice and snow and the house barred by wintry rigour against



COLD STUFFING.—Little Gussie Greedy hangs his stocking outside the chimney so that he can be sure to get it filled, but is not entirely satisfied with the result.
DRAWN BY F. BEARD FOR "JUDGE."

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his approach. Departing as quickly as he came, he rode for miles and miles towards the city of the Rising Sun, and when the morning came a wet and empty stocking was found at the top of the chimney by the little boy who had placed it there. No message had been left, but there remained a lesson in the heart of the little one, for good or ill.

Would we could always be as successful in interpreting the morals taught by artists! From them we get so many pictures of the humorous side of Christmas and its festivities that we tend to forget the sorrow. Where there exists a Christmas tree and a purse to buy its candles and pendent ornaments, there will pleasure reign, but there yet remain some lives into which a real Christmas rarely comes, try as we may in philanthropic mood to give it them. The little waif in the slums who got nothing for the holidays but two punishments, and "didn't hang up no stockin' for them neither," is a typical figure in a class that is always with us. To relieve distress thus humorously emphasized is, happily, a common work at such a season.

The best-laid plans of philanthropy, however, stop short in many cases where they would do most good. Says little Milly, in one of our pictures, "Don't yer think if she hung up her stockings Santa Claus might give her a pair of legs to put in 'em?" the remark being directed against a waif, with spindle legs, carrying a heavy basket along a snow-covered pavement. How wise it would be if we, in our Christmas philanthropy, were to fill the stockings of the poor with fatter limbs instead of presents! The Christmas feeling that we have no right to our own turkey if we have not filled the larder of the poor is a feeling beautiful in itself. More effective would it be were we to do it daily, and not soothe ourselves with the balm that Christmas comes but once a year.



"Did you get anything for the holidays, Billy?"
"Yes; dad give me two lickin's, and I didn't hang up no stockin' for them neither." DRAWN BY M. WOOLF FOR "LIFE."

That the festival does come but once a year is looked upon by some as a blessing. Consider, for instance, the poor father who, in a benevolent mood, undertakes to act the part of Santa Claus at the Christmas-tree festivities. Father thinks, in his innocent way, that it would be no end of a lark to dress up and please the little children, but we have known many cases where father has pleased the children to the point of terror by his



PERSONAL.—Milly: "Don't yer think if she hung up her stockings Santa Claus might give her a pair of legs to put in 'em?"
DRAWN BY M. WOOLF FOR "LIFE."

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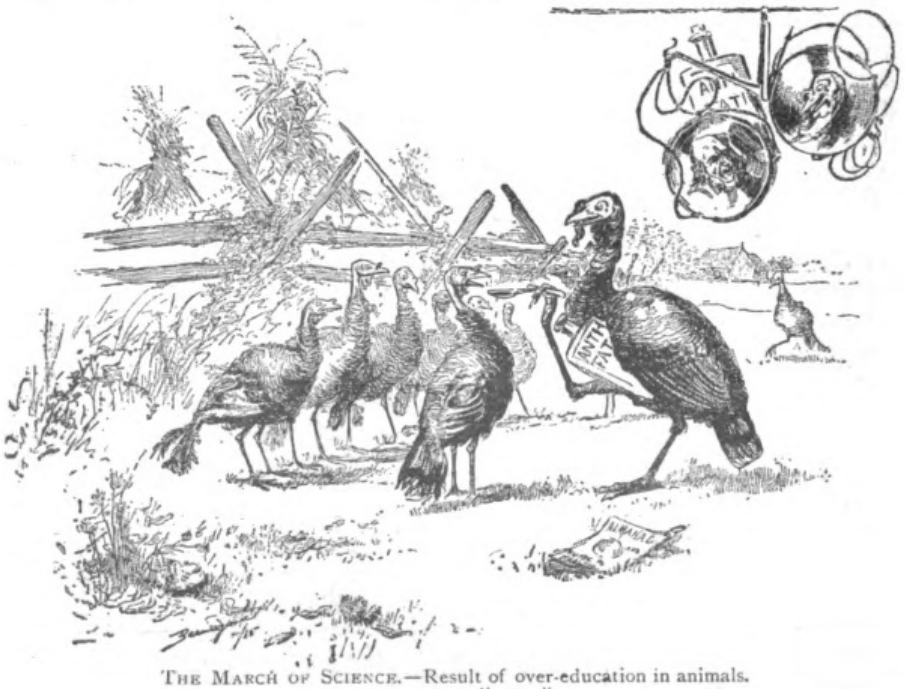


There has been an interesting event in Bagly's household, of which Johnny has been kept in ignorance. Johnny: "Put this on the tree, too, Pop. I found it in mummy's room. She's asleep."
DRAWN BY J. A. SMITH FOR "PUCK."

extraordinary rig. Again, it is no small job to do Santa's work thoroughly, and to come out of a chimney just like the real thing is a feat of grace quite impossible to the well-fed British parent of mature years. At such times as these accidents are bound to happen, for the curiosity of the family to know just what father is doing is a known quantity, certain to be expressed in the little equation of holiday life. One of our humorists tells us how the Christmas tree was in preparation in the home of one Bagly just after a certain interesting event had taken place. Johnny, who had been kept in ignorance, suddenly appeared in the room with a parcel in his arms. "Put this on the tree, too, Pop," cried Johnny; "I found it in mummy's room. She's asleep." We have nothing more to add, except that this harassing scene is immortalized on the present page.

As for the good, fat turkey which forms the staple of our Christmas feast, there is little to be said that has not already been told. There yet remains a chance for someone to sing his praises as Lamb sang the praises of the pig, and as the writers of the olden time lauded the virtues of the boar's head. One old writer, dealing with pre-Christmas preparations, has barbarously written: "Now capons and hens, beside turkeys, geese, and ducks, with beef and mutton, must all die, for in twelve days a multitude of people will not be fed with a little. Now plums and spice, sugar and honey, square it among pies and broth. Now or never must music be in tune, for the youth must dance and sing to get them a-heat, while the aged sit by the fire."

What the turkey thought of these prepara-



THE MARCH OF SCIENCE.—Result of over-education in animals.
DRAWN FOR "LIFE."

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tions, or thinks of them to-day, would be fit subject for an ornithologist to consider. Does the sumptuous bird have a foreboding of his fate? Can it be that he knows the real reason of his being — that the kindly care bestowed upon him by the farmer in the month of November tricks him not? As the old poets say, we trow not. Foolish he may be, but the turkey is too old a bird — as he sometimes proves himself to be — not to understand the object of his existence, and he bears it almost bravely when doomsday comes. The day has yet to arrive — although the humorist has anticipated it — when turkeys will gather in a farmyard to discuss the virtues of anti-fat.

On one of the turkey's virtues all can to-day unite to praise. It is a filling bird. And, if we look back upon our childhood days, there is not one of us who will fail to understand the condition of Mr. Jacob McFinnigan, the small and swelling youth shown here. Sermons might be written on this subject.



Mr. Charles O Connor: "Golly, wot's der matter wid yer, Jakey?"
Mr. Jacob McFinnigan: "Turkey."
DRAWN BY "CHIP" FOR "LIFE."

The end of all is the pudding. It comes upon the table smoking hot and leaves behind it memories of a happy day. It goes by parcel post to English families throughout the world, and does more good than Christmas cards. It is a staple commodity upon which the household can fall back at any time, and can be used to induce manual labour in tramps, with indifferent result.

We are indebted to Messrs. James Henderson for permission to reproduce the drawings from *Puck*, *Judge*, and *Life* which we have selected from *Pictorial Comedy*.



MISPLACED GENEROSITY.
Mrs. Gamp (to tramp): "If you saw up that wood for me I will give you this Christmas pudding."



Tramp (a few minutes later): "Beg parding, mum, but if it makes no difference to you I would rather saw up the pudding and eat the wood."
DRAWN BY TOM BROWNE FOR "THE KING."

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From a] THE GATE OF MENAGERIE FARM. *[Photo.*

XLVI.—A WOODEN MENAGERIE.

THE animals in this menagerie bite not. The lion does not roar, the elephant never eats nuts and cakes, and the sea-serpent is as peaceable as such a serpent ought to be. No one ever visits this extraordinary "Zoo" to see the animals fed, for they have no appetite, and can go from one year's end to the other without a morsel of food, and the inquisitive visitor can poke any one of the exhibits with a stick, yet never evoke an ebullition of zoological wrath. Indeed, one can wander with assured safety through any part of the "Zoo," and little children can see everything thoroughly well without the help of their uncles or their mothers.

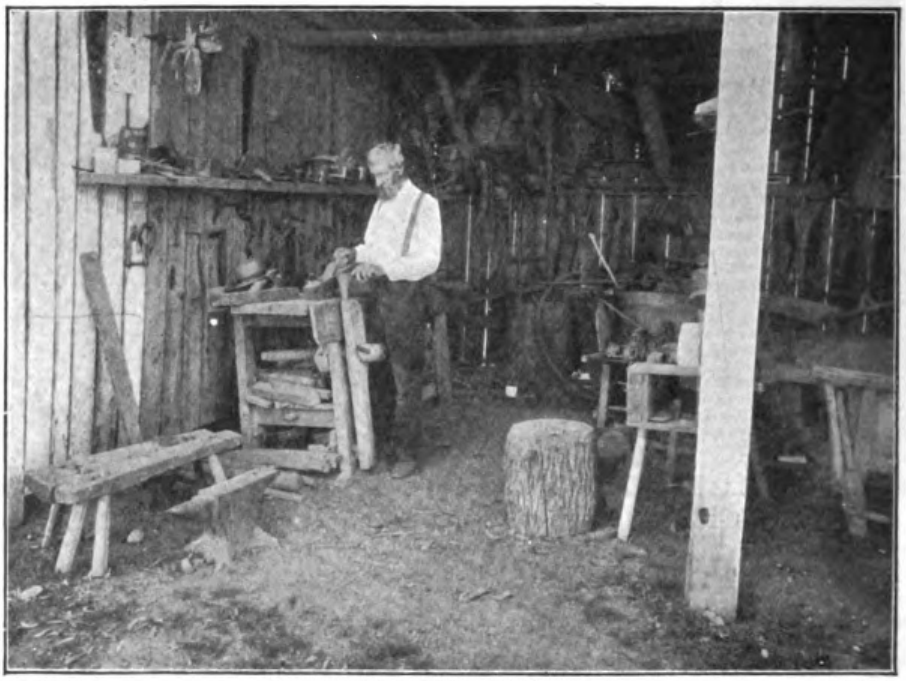
It would, of course, be otherwise were these animals not made of wood, the wood being the roots of trees which Mr. Hugh E. Jones, a kindly-hearted gentleman of seventy-six years, has for a long time collected on his farm near Columbus, Ohio. Mr. Jones's own title for his homestead and its collection is Menagerie Farm, and under that name it has attained a reputation which has travelled far beyond the borders of the "Buck-eye State." Possibly it is the best name, too, for there are other things on his farm besides animals, particularly men, and if these men happen to be fearfully and wonderfully made it is only in strict accordance with that well-known dictum which to name the author of would be to asperse the intelligence of our readers.

Forty years ago Mr. Jones went to America and settled in Ohio, after an adventurous life passed near the Holy Land. He was born on board his father's ship within three miles of Alexandria, Egypt, and the effect of environment on youthful fancy is shown to-day on his Ohio farm. Whether or not the entrance gate was built before or after the other attractions of Menagerie Farm we cannot at the moment say, but the gate shown in the above photograph is a fairly exact reproduction in wood of the original brass gate which leads from Jericho to Jerusalem. It is hung in the centre, and opens inward or outward, forward or back. The effect of environment upon maturity—or it may be to an intelligent reading of the daily press—is shown by the elaboration of the original design. On top of the gate an old and not always to be honoured friend, Oom Paul, stands in the centre, and acts as a weather-vane for the benefit of passers-by. On the right post screams the American eagle, and on the left post a democratic "rooster" raises its head in conscious hope of a glorious future, yet sadly aware that for nearly a decade he has not had a genuine opportunity to crow. The introduction of these two birds gives evidence of the proprietor's patriotism and political proclivities, and the

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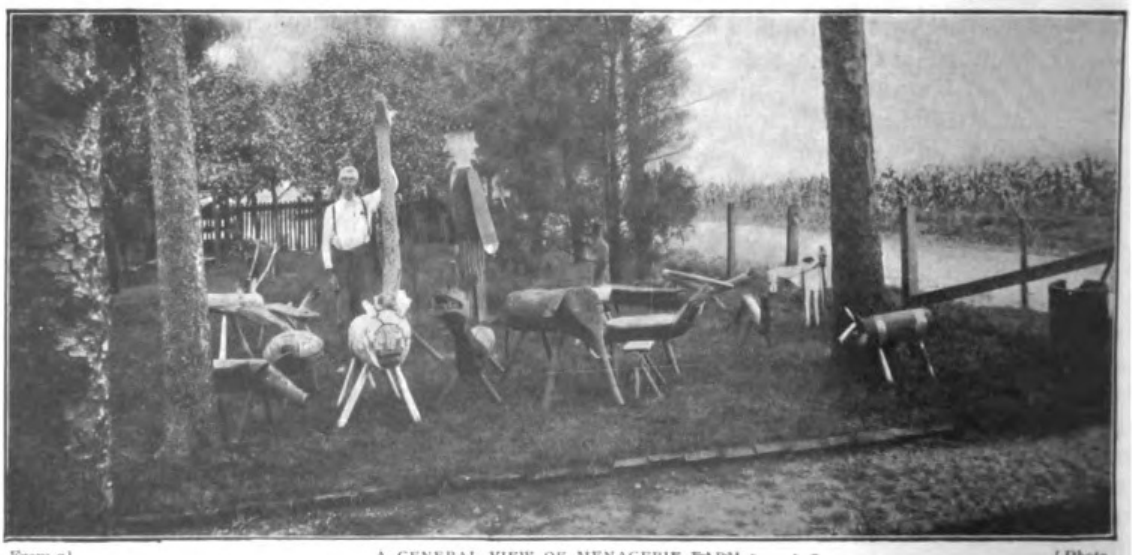
gate as a whole is a most commendable example of native ingenuity.

For the convenience of travellers the respective distances to Columbus and Lockbourne are given upon this gate, and on the right-hand gate-post Mr. Jones's letter-box is attached, giving all necessary postal information, as follows: "United States rural delivery. Box II., L. Station C. Route 3, South-East." Those who would make a trip to this remarkable farm now possess accurate information as to its whereabouts, and we can only add that the farm is worth going miles to see.



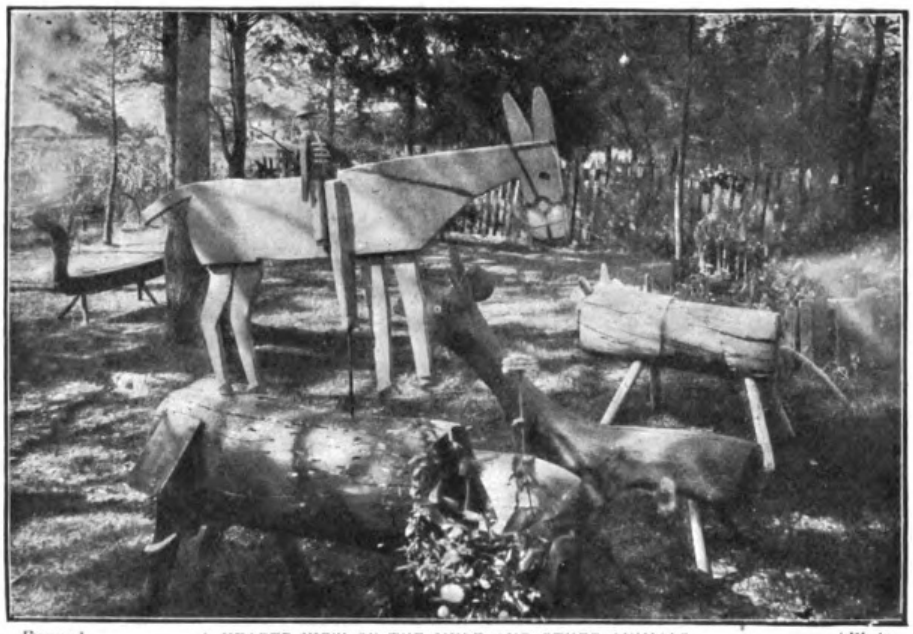
From a] MR. HUGH E. JONES IN HIS WORKSHOP. *[Photo.*

If we enter the gate we are in the midst of a collection of figures extraordinary and, indeed, unique. The animals are scattered about the lawn with a profusion almost characteristic of bounteous Nature. The elephant looks down with some disdain upon the deep-sea turtle, and the sea-serpent raises its fearsome head from the billows of the turf towards the monarch of the jungle. This lion, by the way, was Mr. Jones's first contribution to his menagerie, and the improvement in the handiwork of the proprietor from early times to the present is shown if you look at the mule on the following page. Up to the time of writing this mule was the latest contribution to the menagerie, and



From a] A GENERAL VIEW OF MENAGERIE FARM. *[Photo.*

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From a] A NEARER VIEW OF THE MULE AND OTHER ANIMALS. *[Photo.*

was, of course, suggested by the late war in South Africa, as it is, on the face of it, a distinctly American mule, with a British soldier on top. The shipment of American mules to South Africa is, of course, a fact; but it yet remains to be proved that Tommy utilized the Yankee hybrid for general cavalry purposes. That, however, is by the way. We ought to add that this wooden mule, like mules in general, arrived very slowly at maturity, for it was entirely hand-made, and to turn the root of an ordinary apple tree into an approximate representation of a forty-dollar quadruped is not a labour to be completed in a night.

In all this curious collection there are but two animals made of oak, these being the giraffe and Persian wild boar, which are shown together in the last of our illustrations. All the others have been modelled out of the roots of apple trees, and all the roots have been found on Mr. Jones's own land. Students of Nature have often observed the peculiar shape into which apple trees, root and branch, twist themselves, and it was such observation that gave to this ingenious man the idea of Menagerie Farm. The embellishment of the wood with teeth, eyes, and other characteristics of the animal kingdom was a natural advance upon the original idea, and, to paraphrase a well-known Johnsonism, the wonder is, not that they really look like animals in a "Zoo," but that the "Zoo" should have been thought of at all.

The people who visit Menagerie Farm come from all parts, and an afternoon's outing in this curious demesne is made pleasant for everyone by the courteous simplicity of the owner in his treatment of his guests. He will tell you, in more detail than we can use, of the history of the farm, its slow but regular development, the people, noted and unnoted, who have come to visit him, and if you care to hear you will be told the interesting reminiscences of an active and adventurous youth. If you wish he will take you to the room in which he works, where, with chisel, plane, and saw, he laboriously executes his ever-growing collection. You may in this simple workshop, if you care to stay long enough, witness the development of the gnarled wood into something interesting and full of surprise. Nature, full of tricks, has supplied the material, and the man does the rest. It is, after all, a hobby, but it gives pleasure not only to him but to others, and is a proof of a contented old age.

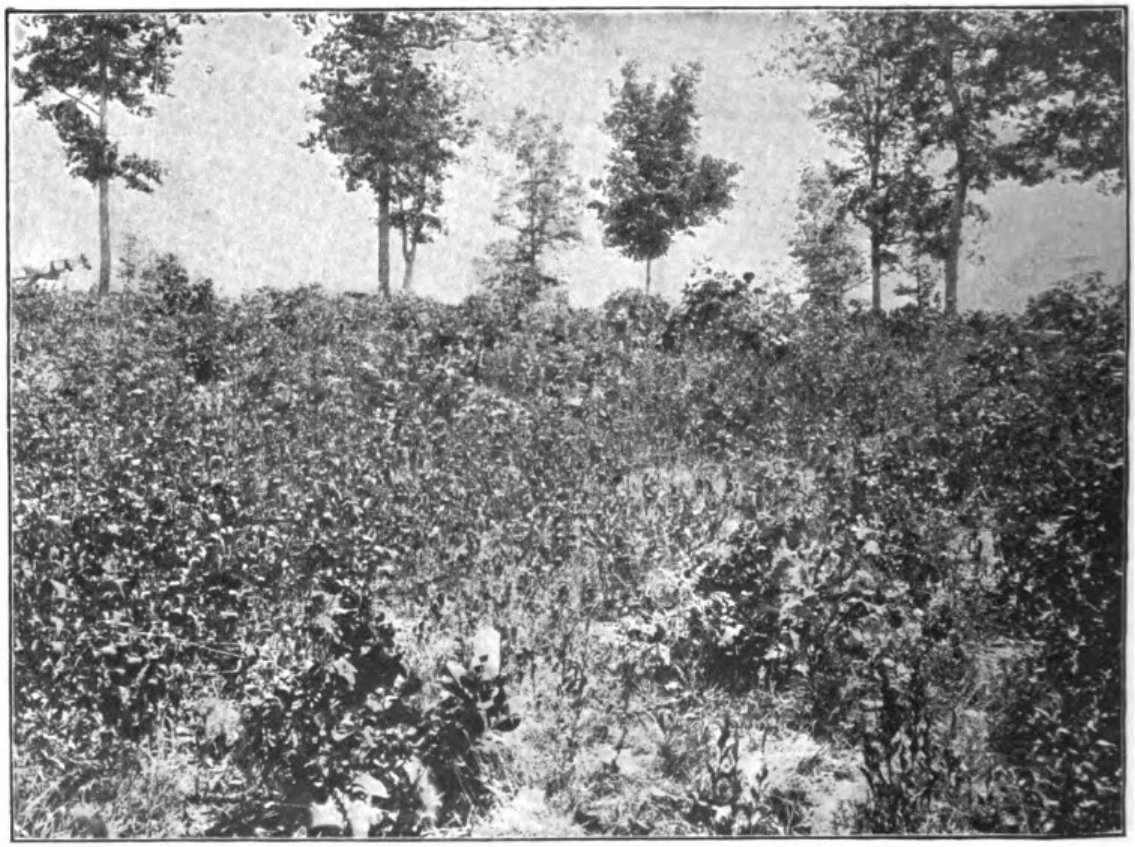


THE GIRAFFE AND THE PERSIAN WILD BOAR.
From a Photo.

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XLVII.—GOATS AS LAND-CLEARERS.

THE present is the age of machinery and mechanical labour in lieu of manual, for the very cogent reason that it is both cheaper and quicker. But even a machine costs money, and after it has accomplished its allotted task is only worth its weight in old iron. An enterprising American farmer has gone one better, since the means by which he performed a special task in hand were actually worth more to him than the price he expended in securing them.



From a] WHAT THE LAND LOOKED LIKE BEFORE THE GOATS WERE TURNED IN. *[Photo.*

Mr. D. D. Moss is a wealthy farmer, owning large expanses of fields and uncleared pasture in Boone County, Missouri. As is always the case out West, when a farmer desires to open up any of his ground for agricultural purposes it is primarily necessary for him to clear away all the bushes, weeds, and other obnoxious shrubbery on the land. Mr. Moss's speciality is the manufacture of vaccine, and for this purpose he has a large stock of the finest-bred young cattle.

A few months ago he desired to open up and develop a large expanse of his virgin land. It had run very much to seed, being covered with dense undergrowth and weeds of all descriptions. It looked a Herculean task to clear it by the conventional means, either manual or mechanical, and would have necessitated a heavy expenditure of money. While cogitating over the matter it suddenly occurred to him that, as goats will devour nearly everything green, the land might be efficaciously and cheaply cleared by this agency.

Mr. Moss consulted Dr. H. J. Waters, the head of the Missouri State Agricultural Experiment Station—to whom we are indebted for permission to reproduce the accompanying photographs—at Columbia, and the result of these negotiations was that a decision was made to test the experiment, and to follow its progress with a view to its adaptation to other districts. Several farmers in the State were apprised of the fact, and requested to repair to Mr. Moss's farm to follow the trial.

After the consultation with Dr. Waters, Mr. Moss hied to the cattle market at Kansas City and bought two hundred mongrel goats, at an average price of nine shillings each —a total outlay of ninety pounds—and had them transported to his farm. Here a

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certain area of land was wired off. The vaccine young cattle were first turned in to eat up the sweetest grass, followed by other general cattle, which ate everything that was worth eating. The goats were then turned in and allowed to roam over the area of their own free will.

Naturally, the animals first cleared off what was to them the most luscious and appetizing verdure, but as this was in a very leaf left behind them. The weeds were cropped close to the ground; all the leaves were devoured off the bushes; the trees had been barked as high as the animals could reach, and even the young shoots and tender branches had been consumed. Our photographs, showing the land before and after the goats had been at work upon it, will afford a very comprehensive idea of the utility of goats for this special work. The animals



From a] THE GOATS AT WORK. *[Photo.*

short time all devoured they soon turned their attention to the coarser pasture. The farmers who had gathered at the vaccine farm followed the experiment closely every day, while Dr. Waters and his own staff from the State Agricultural Station made daily careful observations and memoranda as to the varieties of shrubbery preferred by the goats, and the effect of the constant nibbling by the animals upon the plants. As a matter of fact, there were very few descriptions of foliage the goats refused to eat, and these comprised thistles and one or two other plants.

The observations made showed that the animals first cropped off the elm, dewberry, blackberry, and crab-apple classes of bushes as being the most tasty, and the hickory and ash were left to the last. The last-mentioned small trees the goats barked with their horns. The animals did not display very appreciable preference for any particular weed beyond the dock leaf, and they scoured the pasture for this dainty.

The rapidity and thoroughness with which the animals cleared the ground were most remarkable. When the goats had passed over an expanse there was scarcely a green

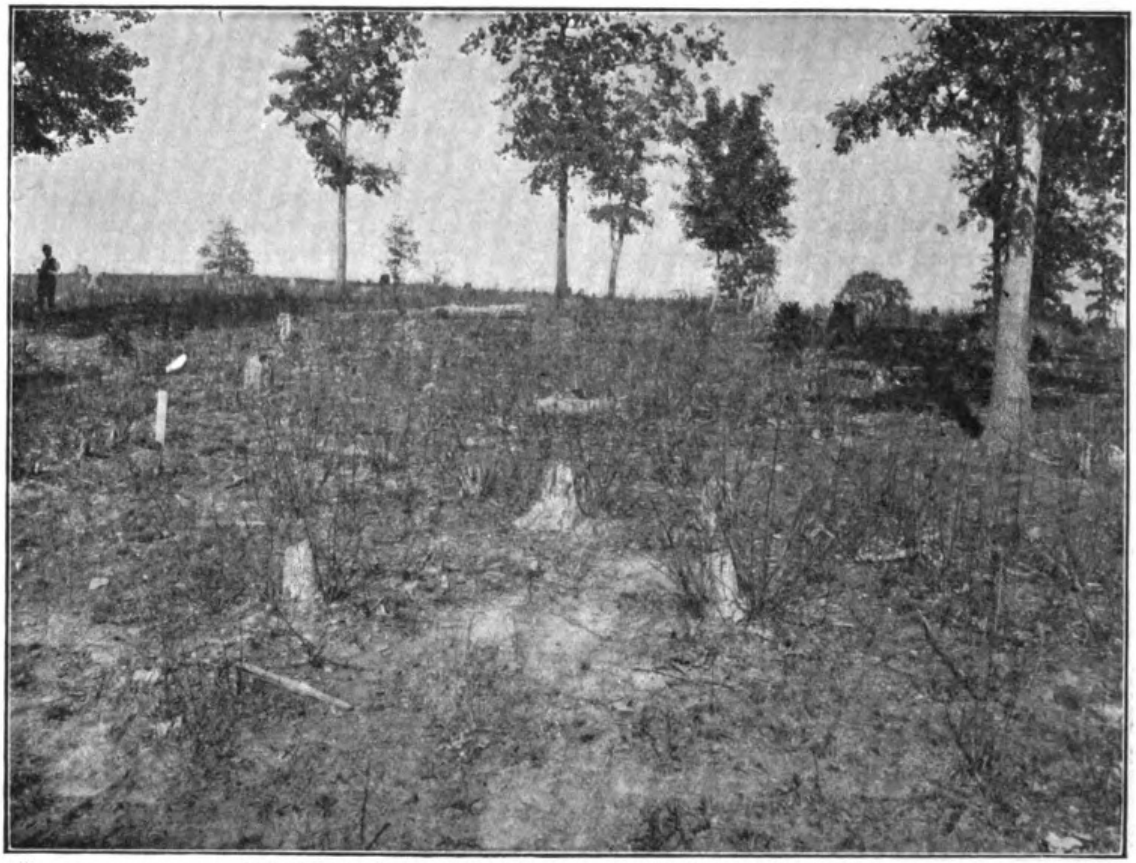
cleared the land at the rate of forty acres in twenty days, an average of two acres per day, which was considerably quicker than would have been accomplished by machinery or manual effort.

Also while this garbage was being devoured Mr. Moss was improving the marketable value of his stock. When he purchased the goats they were in a comparatively wasted condition, but they soon gained flesh and improved their appearance after being turned out upon the weeding work, thus showing that these animals can thrive very well upon the verdure that other classes of cattle refuse to eat. They also entailed no further expense beyond their initial cost, since the pasture they devoured was sufficient food for them.

Moreover, Mr. Moss, the enterprising promoter of this unique scheme, further profited in his venture by a substantial increase in his flock. During the season the herd was augmented by sixty kids, which were worth four shillings a head in the open market at the age of one week, and increased in value as they grew older.

Under the circumstances of this unqualified success achieved by Mr. Moss's experiment it is no small wonder that several other

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From a] THE SAME PIECE OF LAND WHEN THE GOATS HAD FINISHED WITH IT. *[Photo.*

farmers are adopting the same cheap process of developing their land. Labour is difficult to obtain in some districts in Missouri. By means of the goats large tracts of land will be opened up for the culture of cereals or other produce. The goat-labour is unlike any other : it enhances rather than depreciates in value, providing there is a sufficiency of verdure for them to thrive upon ; maintenance costs nothing ; the work is done for nothing ; and when the task is accomplished the animals, owing to their improved condition and appearance, can be sold for more than they cost. In the case of Mr. Moss's herd of two hundred goats, their present value is estimated at two hundred pounds—an excellent return upon ninety pounds' expenditure for less than one year, which proves that goats for farm-labouring are a gilt-edged investment.

XLVIII.—A WHISTLING CHOIR.

THE famous whistling regiment of history has a present-day rival in America. The new whistling force is not an army, however, but a choir. The head-quarters of this, the only whistling choir in the world, is in the Berean Baptist Sunday-school building in Augusta, Ga. Mr. F. F. Lockhart, who is the superintendent of the school, is responsible for this brand-new departure in Church music, and it was through his efforts that the innovation became eminently successful.

Mr. Lockhart obtained his idea from "The Burgomaster," a play which recently appeared in America. He heard one of the airs, called "The Tale of the Kangaroo," whistled, and when the audience joined in the chorus the effect struck him as being so beautiful that he at once decided to put it in use in his choir.

Mr. Lockhart talked the matter over with the Rev. J. H. Oliver, the pastor of the church, and it was decided that the plan should be tried on the following Sunday. The Sunday-school numbers about three hundred members, and, although music has always been a marked feature of the exercises, it was often difficult to induce the scholars to sing, as everyone hesitated about taking the lead, so that the hymns were very apt to drag.

On the Sunday when Mr. Lockhart had planned to introduce whistling music the

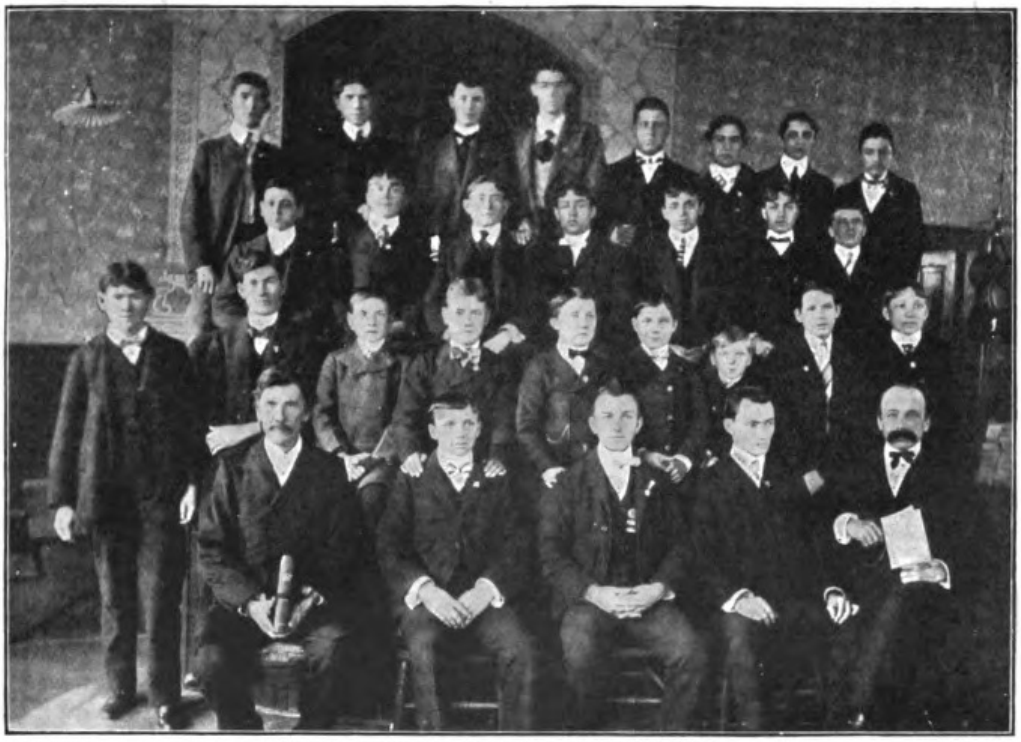
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exercises were opened by a short talk on the sacredness of all melody and harmony, and of the praise that could be rendered to God in every form of music. Mr. Lockhart then told the scholars that they were going to try a new form of music. He said that, as a great many of the young men who had really good voices would not sing because they had never been trained to do so, he had decided to form a whistling choir.

The superintendent had no difficulty in inducing the boys and young men to come forward and whistle. Those who would have left the Sunday-school rather than lead the singing responded readily when asked to whistle.

Twenty-eight young men, attracted by the novelty of the thing, volunteered to join the whistling choir. They took seats around the organ, and after Mr. Lockhart had announced that the Sunday-school should sing the words while the new choir whistled, the boys were requested to lead the next hymn. The "Whistling Orchestra" responded heartily; the boys felt quite at home in the work, and the innovation was a pronounced success from the start. Never in the history of the Berean Sunday-school had such a volume of music flooded the building.

With the whistlers to lead them the scholars gained confidence, and all those who could sing did so with a will, and the high, clear notes of the choir harmonized beautifully with the vocalizing of the school. All were unanimous in their praise of the scheme, and the "Whistling Orchestra" became a permanent organization. Rehearsal nights were arranged, and the whistlers showed the sincerity of their desire to progress by attending the rehearsals regularly. They have now developed their whistling faculties to a high degree of perfection, and their notes are not only high and voluminous, but faultless and in perfect pitch. Even chromatic passages are faithfully and correctly executed, and sharps and flats are distinctly brought out.



From a] MR. F. F. LOCKHART AND HIS WHISTLING CHOIR. *[Photo.*

This novel whistling choir has proved a drawing card; many have visited the church prepared to criticise and even laugh at the whistlers, but they have all remained to enjoy. There is nothing frivolous in the innovation. If the congregation is at first inclined to smile when the boys screw their mouths up into a "ready," amusement is soon lost in admiration as the music rises and falls, sweet and clear.

At first the choir merely led the singers; but now, having gained confidence, they give whistling overtures unassisted by organ or scholars. All are interested in the Berean whistlers, and many Sunday-school superintendents and pastors are talking of following in Mr. Lockhart's lead.

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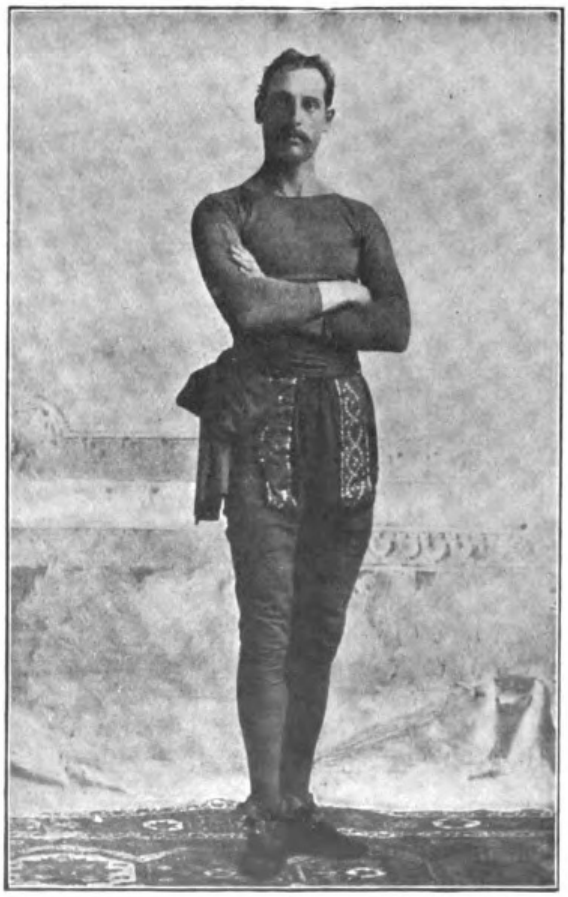
XLIX.—A ROPE SLIDE FROM A BALLOON.

By a thrilling slide of fifteen hundred feet from a balloon, Simeon Nicks, formerly a sailor, has made himself the champion long-distance slider of the world.

Nicks himself thinks this feat no more wonderful than a slide down the jib-stay of one of the many good ships on which he has sailed. But thousands of spectators witnessed with breathless anxiety his daring performance at Charles Park, Los Angeles, California.

It is the longest slide on record, and it is believed that no similar performance was ever before attempted.

The turnstile register at the Park showed that fifteen thousand people were within the enclosure, and every neighbouring house-top, fence, shed, and tree held as many spectators as could find space on which to sit or stand. About 6 p.m. all the arrangements were perfected and the balloon rose in the air. The huge gas-bag was made captive by the rope by which Nicks proposed to regain the earth. He carried in his hands a ten-inch section of garden hose, slit up the side, that fitted snugly over the inch and a quarter Italian hemp rope that kept the balloon from straying. Accompanying him were Aeronaut Hudson and the son of Professor Baldwin.



SIMEON NICKS, CHAMPION SLIDER OF THE WORLD.
From a Photo.

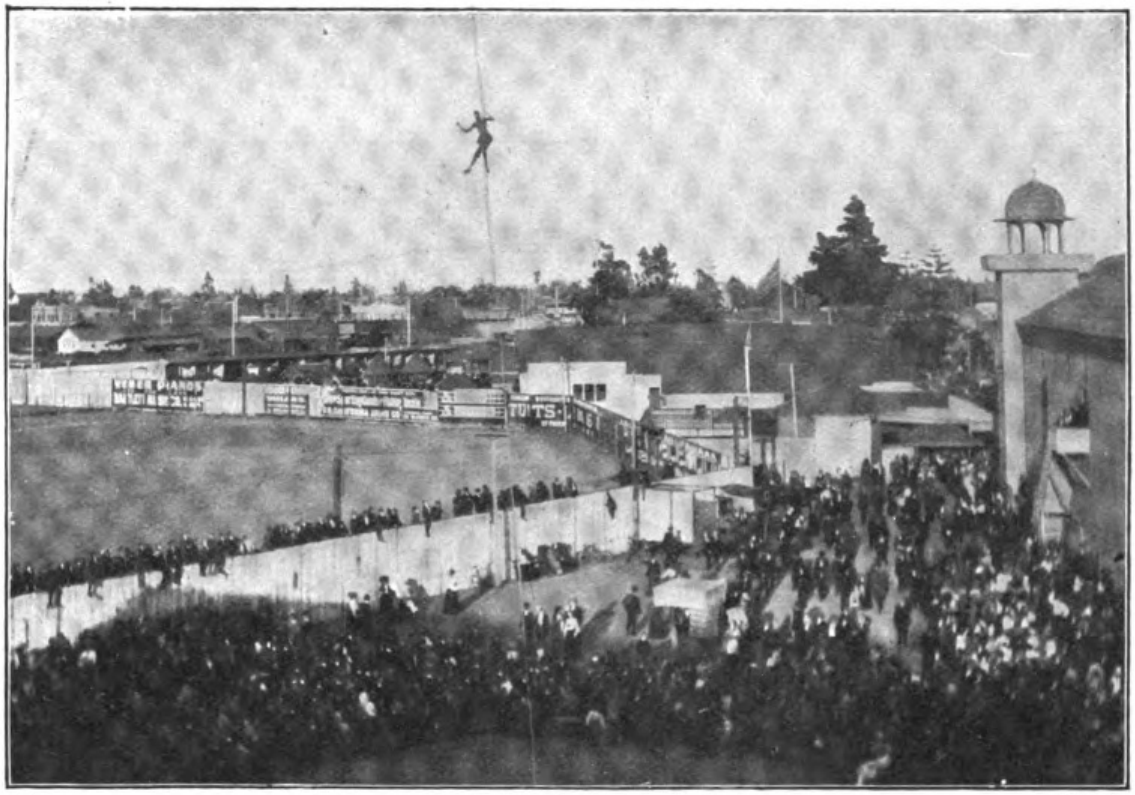
At a height of about two hundred feet Nicks clambered out of the basket, and, with a sailor's twist of his legs around the pliable hemp, he began to slide downward. Then he checked himself and, remaining stationary, he rose with the balloon until it reached the limit of the rope, which was thus held taut. Then he began to slide, slowly at first, and gradually increasing his speed until the rope spun through his hands at a terrific rate. Regulating his speed at will he sometimes came to a full stop, when he would release his hand-hold and lean back as though he were in an arm-chair. The friction of the rope on the calves of his legs created a burning sensation, sufficient to scorch his trousers; but his hands, being protected by the hose, were not affected in the least by the long descent.

Then he grasped the rope with his hands, released it from his legs, and made a giant swing through the air. Then he would slide swiftly down for a great distance, catch himself with one leg, and turn himself upside down. He continued to cut up such dangerous antics until he reached the ground, and every moment thrilled the spectators with some new sensation.

When finally he reached the ground there was one tremendous sigh of relief. Many declared that no money would tempt them to witness another such performance.

But for Nicks, who accomplished the descent in just five minutes, the feat was as easy a thing as he could be asked to do, for while he was a sailor he became known to the tars of all nations as the most daring rope performer afloat. He was in the American Navy and also in the merchant service, and he is no doubt the best-known man that ever went aloft. Once he slid down a three-inch wire cable into the shaft of the Silver King Mine in British Columbia. Thirty-eight feet below was a cage contain-

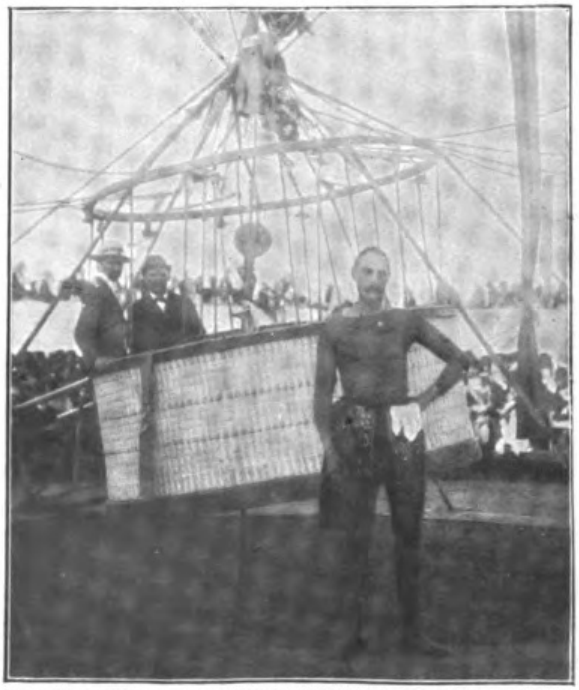
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From a] NICKS NEARING THE GROUND ON HIS SLIDE OF 1,500FT. *[Photo.*

ing a number of miners. The cable had broken, and it was necessary for someone to go down and repair the damage before the men could be rescued. Nicks volunteered, and succeeded in splicing the cable. At another time he swam across the Mersey River at Liverpool, England, five times without touching land on either side, for he is also a swimmer of international reputation. In this contest he won the swimming championship of the world's navies.

Simeon Nicks was born in Los Angeles, California, in 1863. He became a sailor in 1875. Since then he has been round the world seven times, sailing before the mast under flags of every nationality and touching at almost every known port. He is of light complexion, with brown hair and blue eyes. His weight is one hundred and seventy pounds. To a remarkable series of adventures he adds the harrowing experience of having been shipwrecked with three companions off the coast of Africa, one hundred and fifty miles from the Cape of Good Hope; and he was quartermaster on the *Walla Walla*, bound north to Puget Sound from San Francisco, California, when she went down off Point Arena.



From a] NICKS JUST AFTER HIS WONDERFUL SLIDE. *[Photo.*

When asked what were his sensations of fear when dropping from the clouds on a rope, he was amused at the question.

"Sensations of fear?" repeated the athletic sailor; "I don't know what they are. I've been all over a ship and have made sail when she was rolling hard enough to take the sticks out of her. It is no use to be afraid."

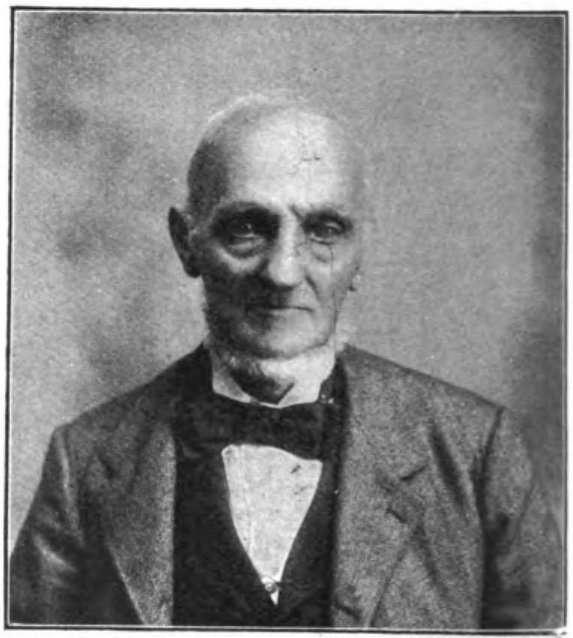
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The Man Who Drove the "Rocket."

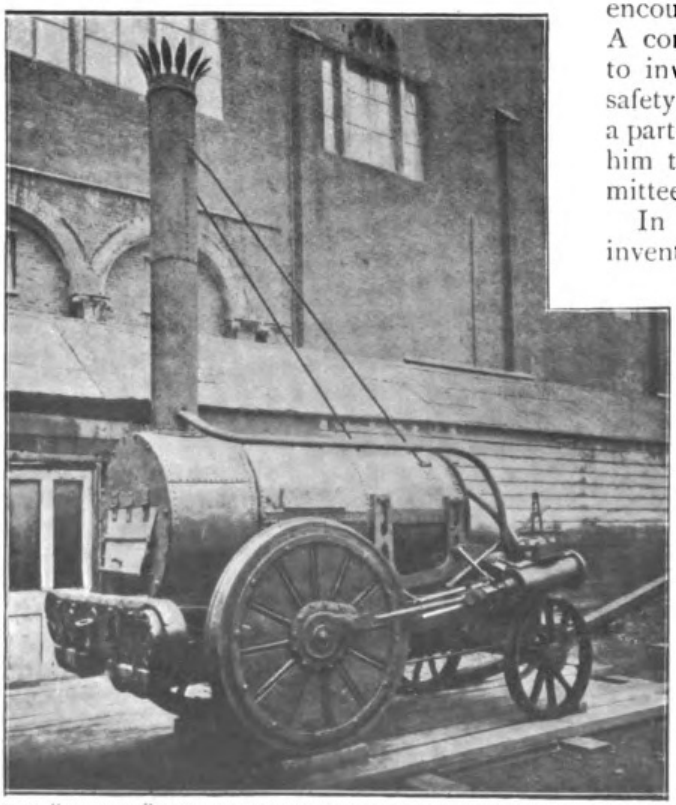
ALTHOUGH seventy-three years have passed since George Stephenson's "Rocket" made its initial trip between Manchester and Liverpool, the man who held the throttle during that performance is still living. He is Edward Entwistle, and lives in Des Moines, Iowa, where he has resided continuously for forty-five years.

Notwithstanding his eighty-seven years, Entwistle is still in the full possession of all his mental faculties. He hears distinctly and can converse as well as a person of half his age. His sight is but slightly impaired, and although the once-powerful frame is drooping, it still retains much of the strength that was formerly so abundant. Mr. Entwistle lives with his wife, who is slightly his junior.

He was born in Lancashire in March, 1815, at Tilsey's Banks. When old enough to work he was apprenticed as a machinist to the Duke of Bridgewater, and put at work in the shops at Liverpool. After having served as an engineer for some time Stephenson conceived the idea of a railroad from Liverpool to Manchester, and about 1825 a charter was secured from Parliament.



EDWARD ENTWISTLE, THE MAN WHO DROVE THE "ROCKET."
From a Photo. by Hodge, Des Moines.



THE "ROCKET," NOW PRESERVED IN THE SOUTH KENSINGTON MUSEUM.
From a Photo.

Entwistle knew Stephenson well, and talks freely of the difficulties which the latter encountered in getting the charter through. A committee was appointed by Parliament to investigate and report on the merits and safety of the road. The Duke of Newcastle, a particular friend of Stephenson, admonished him to be careful in his replies to the committee lest the charter be withheld.

In due time the committee notified the inventor that it desired his presence, and he obeyed the summons. The interview was long and exceedingly monotonous, the committee seeming to be anxious to get some reply which would warrant its refusing the request. One of the most important questions was: "How much will the engines pull and what will be their speed?" To which Stephenson very cautiously replied; "They will travel fast enough and pull freight enough to pay interest on the money invested." The report of the committee was favourable and the charter was granted.

Entwistle likes best of all to tell of his selection to run the "Rocket." A prize of five hundred pounds was offered for the best high-speed engine for passenger

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service, and Stephenson had perfected the now famous "Rocket." When at last everything was ready and the day for the competition was almost at hand, he found that he had no desirable engine-driver. He accordingly went to the shops, where many of the pieces of the engine had been made, and asked the foreman for a man to run the engine.

"I have no man that is suitable," was the reply; "but if you take that lad there, and can get the permission of the Duke's steward, you may have him, and I'll warrant that he will be satisfactory."

So Stephenson took the lad. They made a trial trip together on Sunday. The next day came the contest.

The quaint old print which we here reproduce shows the triumph of the "Rocket." The eye of man beheld for the first time a machine running at the speed of a mile in two minutes. Up to that time ten or twelve miles an hour had been looked upon as the utmost limit of conceivable velocity in travelling, and the general amazement at the performance of Stephenson's engine reached a pitch of which no description can convey an idea. The "Rocket" is recorded to have run on one occasion four miles in four minutes and a half, a speed scarcely exceeded by any engine of the present day.

For two years and a half after the day of the competition Entwistle ran a train on the road, making from two to four trips each way daily. Finally he became nervous and ill from the high strain to which he was constantly subjected, and gave up the job.

In speaking of the speed made by the "Rocket" and by the other engines on the road, Mr. Entwistle declared: "The mile a minute trains of to-day are not such great improvements over those days.



[*the Leadenhall Press.*

THE "ROCKET" WINNING THE PRIZE OF £500, OCTOBER, 1829.

By kind permission of]

Many's the time I've made the thirty-one miles from Liverpool to Manchester in sixty minutes." The average time, however, on the first passenger trip was in the neighbourhood of fourteen miles per hour, while the fastest speed attained was not much above thirty miles per hour.

After leaving the Liverpool and Manchester road Mr. Entwistle went on to one of the coasting steamers of the Duke of Bridgewater, where he remained until 1837—the year of Queen Victoria's ascension—when he removed to America. He obtained work on a Hudson River steamer, but shortly afterwards, the engine-driver of the locomotive "York" having been injured, Mr. Entwistle was back in railroad service. He did not remain long, however, but returned to his boat as soon as possible. When the *Troy*—his boat—was finally condemned as unsafe he took the engines to Rockland County, N.Y., and set them up in a rolling mill. In 1844 he landed in Chicago, where he remained for eleven years working in different positions as a stationary engine-driver. He ran the *Rossiter*, a lake steamer, for several seasons. Upon his removal to Des Moines he ran a boat between Keokuk and Des Moines until the river ceased to be navigable, and until ten years ago followed his calling of stationary engine-driver. Mr. Entwistle believes that he was the first engineer to apply sand to rails to prevent a train from slipping.

He has amassed a small competence, which is invested in a farm, the income of which is sufficient to support himself and wife in their old age. They are among the oldest people in the State, and Mr. Entwistle has achieved no little notoriety because of his connection with George Stephenson and the "Rocket."

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By E. Nesbit.

IX.—THE LAST WISH.

Of course, you who see above that this is the ninth (and last) chapter know very well that the day of which this chapter tells must be the last on which Cyril, Anthea, Robert, and Jane will have a chance of getting anything out of the psammead, or sand-fairy.

But the children themselves did not know this. They were full of rosy visions, and whereas on other days they had often found it extremely difficult to think of anything really nice to wish for, their brains were now full of the most beautiful and sensible ideas. "This," as Jane remarked afterwards, "is always the way." Everyone was up extra early that morning, and these plans were hopefully discussed in the garden before breakfast. The old idea of a hundred pounds in modern florins was still first favourite, but there were others that ran it close—the chief of these being the "pony each" idea. This had a great advantage. You could wish for a pony each during the morning, ride it all day, have it vanish at sunset, and wish it back again next day; which would be an economy of litter and stabling. But at breakfast two things happened. First, there was a letter from mother. Granny was better; and mother and father hoped to be home that very afternoon. A cheer arose. And, of course, this news at once scattered all the before-breakfast wish-ideas, for everyone saw quite plainly that the wish of the day must be something to please mother and not to please themselves.

"I wonder what she *would* like?" pondered Cyril.

"She'd like us all to be good," said Jane, primly.

"Yes, but that's so dull for us," Cyril rejoined; "and, besides, I should hope we could be that without sand-fairies to help us. No, it must be something splendid, that we couldn't possibly get without wishing for."

"Look out," said Anthea, in a warning voice; "don't forget yesterday. Remember, we get our wishes now just wherever we happen to be when we say 'I wish.' Don't let's let ourselves in for anything silly to-day of all days."

"All right," said Cyril; "you needn't jaw."

Just then Martha came in with a jugful of hot water for the teapot, and a face full of importance for the children.

"A blessing we're all alive to eat our breakfasses," she said, darkly.

"Why, whatever's happened?" everybody asked.

"Oh, nothing," said Martha, "only it seems nobody's safe from being murdered in their beds nowadays."

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"Nonsense, dears," said mother, briskly. "I'm not such an old woman yet that I can't take my bonnet off in the proper place. Besides, I must wash these black hands of mine."

So up she went, and the children, following her, exchanged glances of gloomy foreboding.

Mother took off her bonnet—it was a very pretty hat really, with white roses in it — and when she had taken it off she went to the dressing-table to do her pretty hair.

On the table between the ring-stand and the pin-cushion lay a green leather case. Mother opened it.

"Oh, how lovely!" she cried. It was a ring — a blue sapphire with shining, many-lighted diamonds set round it. "Wherever did this come from?" mother asked, trying it on her wedding-finger, where it fitted beautifully. "However did it come here?"

"I don't know," said each of the children, truthfully.

"Father must have told Martha to put it here," mother said. "I'll run down and ask her."

"Let me look at it," said Anthea, who knew Martha would not be able to see the ring. But when Martha was asked, of course she denied putting the ring there, and so did Eliza and cook.

Mother came back to her bedroom very much interested and pleased about the ring. But when she opened the dressing-table drawer and found a long case containing an almost priceless diamond necklace she was more interested still, though not so pleased. In the wardrobe, when she went to put away her bonnet, she found a tiara and several brooches, and the rest of the jewellery turned up in various parts of the room during the next half-hour. The children looked more and more uncomfortable, and now Jane began to sniff.

Mother looked at her gravely.

"Jane," she said, "I am sure you know something about this. Now, think before you speak, and tell me the truth."

"We found a fairy," said Jane, obediently.

"No nonsense, please," said her mother, sharply.

"Don't be silly, Jane," Cyril interrupted.



H. R. MILLAR. 1902

"'WE FOUND A FAIRY,' SAID JANE, OBEDIENTLY."

Then he went on, desperately: "Look here, mother, we've never seen the things before, but Lady Chittenden at Peasemarsh Place lost all her jewellery by wicked burglars last night. Could this possibly be it?"

All drew a deep breath. They were saved.

"But how could they have put it here? And why should they?" asked mother, not unreasonably. "Surely it would have been easier and safer to make off with it?"

"Suppose," said Cyril, "they thought it better to wait for—for sunset—nightfall, I mean, before they went off with it. No one but us knew that you were coming back to-day."

"I must send for the police at once," said

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mother, distractedly. "Oh, how I wish daddy were here!"

"Wouldn't it be better to wait till he *does* come?" asked Robert, knowing that his father would not be home before sunset.

"No, no; I can't wait a minute with all this on my mind," cried mother. "All this" was the heap of jewel-cases on the bed. They put them all in the wardrobe and mother locked it. Then mother called Martha.

"Martha," she said, "has any stranger been into my room since I've been away? Now, answer me truthfully."

"No, mum," answered Martha; "leastways, what I mean to say——"

She stopped.

"Come," said her mistress, kindly, "I see someone has. You must tell me at once. Don't be frightened; I'm sure *you* haven't had anything to do with it."



"MARTHA BURST INTO HEAVY SOBS."

Martha burst into heavy sobs.

"I was a-goin' to give you warning this very day, mum, to leave at the end of my month, so I was—on account of me being going to make a respectable young man happy, a gamekeeper he is by trade, mum, and I wouldn't deceive you, of the name of Beale. And it's as true as I stand here. It was your coming home in such a hurry, and no warning given; out of the kindness of his heart, it was, as he says, 'Martha, my beauty,' he says, which I ain't and never was, but you know how them men will go on, 'I can't see you a-toiling and a-moiling, and not lend you a 'elping 'and—which mine is a strong arm, and it's yours, Martha, my dear,' says he; and so he helped me a-cleanin' of the windows—but outside, mum, the whole time, and me in; if I never say another breathing word, it's the gospel truth."

"Were you with him the whole time?" asked her mistress.

"Him outside and me in, I was," said Martha, "except for fetching up a fresh pail and the leather that that slut of a Eliza'd hidden away behind the mangle."

"That will do," said the children's mother. "I am not pleased with you, Martha; but you have spoken the truth, and that counts for something."

When Martha had gone the children clung round their mother.

"Oh, mummy darling," cried Anthea, "it isn't Beale's fault, it isn't really. He's a great dear, he is, truly and honourably, and as honest as the day. Don't let the police take him, mummy, oh, don't, don't, don't!"

It was truly awful. Here was an innocent man accused of robbery through that silly wish of Jane's, and it was absolutely useless to tell the truth. All longed to, but they thought of the straws in the hair and the shrieks of the other frantic maniacs, and they could not do it.

"Is there a cart hereabouts?" asked mother, feverishly. "A trap of any sort; I must drive in to Rochester and tell the police at once."

All the children sobbed: "There's a cart at the farm, but oh, don't go!—don't go!—oh, don't go!—wait till daddy comes home."

Mother took not the faintest notice. When

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she had set her mind on a thing she always went straight through with it. She was rather like Anthea in this respect.

"Look here, Cyril," she said, sticking on her hat with long, sharp, silver-headed pins, "I leave you in charge. Stay in the dressing-room. You can pretend to be swimming boats in the bath, or something. Say I gave you leave. But stay there, with the landing-door open; I've locked the other. And don't let anyone go into my room. Remember, no one knows the jewels are there except me—and all of you, and the wicked thieves who put them there. Robert, you stay in the garden and watch the windows. If anyone tries to get in you must run and tell the two farm men that I'll send up to wait in the kitchen. I'll tell them there are dangerous characters about—that's true enough. Now, remember, I trust you both. But I don't think they'll try it till after dark, so you're quite safe. Good-bye, darlings."

And she locked her bedroom door and went off with the key in her pocket.

The children could not help admiring the dashing and decided way in which she had acted. They thought how useful she would have been in organizing escape from some of the tight places in which they had found themselves of late, in consequence of their ill-timed wishes.

"She's a born general," said Cyril, "but *I* don't know what's going to happen to us. Even if the girls were to hunt for that beastly sammyadd and find it, and get it to take the jewels away again, mother would only think we hadn't looked out properly, and let the burglars sneak in and nick them, or else the police will think *we've* got them, or else that she's been fooling them. Oh, it's a pretty decent average ghastly mess this time, and no mistake."

He savagely made a paper boat and began to float it in the bath, as he had been told, but he did not seem to find it amusing.

Robert went into the garden and sat down on the worn, yellow grass, with his miserable head between his helpless hands.

Anthea and Jane whispered together in the passage downstairs, where the cocoanut matting was with the hole in it that you always catch your foot in if you're not careful. Martha's voice could be heard in the kitchen, grumbling loud and long.

"It's simply quite too dreadfully awful," said Anthea. "How do we know all the diamonds are there too? If they aren't the police will think mother and father have got them, and that they've only given up some of them for a kind of desperate blind. And they'll be put in prison and we shall be branded outcasts, the children of felons. And it won't be at all nice for father and mother either," she added, by a candid afterthought.

"But what can we *do?*" asked Jane.

"Nothing; at least, we might look for the sammyadd again. It's a very, *very* hot day. He may have come out to warm that whisker of his."

"He won't give us any more beastly wishes to-day," said Jane, flatly. "He gets crosser and crosser every time we see him. I believe he hates having to give wishes." Anthea had been shaking her head gloomily; now she stopped shaking it so suddenly that it really looked as though she were pricking up her ears.

"What is it?" asked Jane. "Oh, have you thought of something?"

"Our one chance," cried Anthea, dramatically; "the last, lone, forlorn hope! Come on!"

At a brisk trot she led the way to the sandpit. Oh, joy! there was the psammead, basking in a golden sandy hollow and preening its whiskers happily in the glowing afternoon sun. The moment it saw them it whisked round and began to burrow—it evidently preferred its own company to theirs. But Anthea was too quick for it. She caught it by its furry shoulders gently but firmly, and held it.

"Here—none of that," said the psammead; "leave go of me, will you?"

But Anthea held him fast.

"Dear, kind, darling sammyadd," she said, breathlessly.

"Oh, yes, it's all very well," it said; "you want another wish, I expect, but I can't keep on slaving from morning till night giving people their wishes. I must have some time to myself."

"Do you hate giving wishes?" asked Anthea, gently, and her voice trembled with excitement.

"Of course I do," it said. "Leave go of me or I'll bite; I really will—I mean it. Oh, well, if you choose to risk it——"

Anthea risked it and held on.

"Look here," she said, "don't bite me; listen to reason. If you'll only do what we want to-day we'll never ask you for another wish as long as we live."

The psammead was much moved.

"I'd do anything," it said, in a tearful voice. "I'd almost burst myself to give you one wish after another as long as I held out

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"SHE CAUGHT IT BY ITS FURRY SHOULDERS."

if you'd only never, never ask me to do it after to-day. If you knew how I hate to blow myself out with other people's wishes, and how frightened I am always that I shall strain a muscle or something! And then to wake up every morning and know you've *got* to do it. You don't know what it is—you don't know what it is—you don't." Its voice cracked with emotion, and the last "don't" was a squeak.

Anthea set it down gently on the sand.

"It's all over now," she said, soothingly. "We promise faithfully never to ask for another wish after to-day."

"Well, go ahead," said the psammead; "let's get it over."

"How many can you do?"

"I don't know; as long as I can hold out."

"Well, first, I wish Lady Chittenden may find she's never lost her jewels."

The psammead blew itself out, collapsed, and said, "Done!"

"I wish," said Anthea, more slowly, "mother mayn't get to the police."

"Done!" said the creature, after the proper interval.

"I wish," said Jane, suddenly, "mother could forget all about the diamonds."

"Done!" said the psammead, but its voice was weaker.

"Would you like to rest a little?" asked Anthea, considerately.

"Yes, please," said the psammead; "and before we go any farther, will you wish something for me?"

"Can't you do wishes for yourself?"

"Of course not," it said; "we were always expected to give each other our wishes — not that we had any to speak of in the good old megatherium days. Just wish, will you, that you may never be able, any of you, to tell anyone a word about *me*."

"Why?" asked Jane.

"Why, don't you see, if you told grown-ups I should have no peace of my life. They'd get hold of me, and they wouldn't wish silly things like you do, but real earnest things, and the scientific people would hit on some way of making things last after sunset, as likely as not, and they'd ask for a graduated income-tax, and old-age pensions, and manhood suffrage, and free secondary education, and dull things like that, and get them and keep them, and the whole world would be turned topsy-turvy. Do wish it. Quick."

Anthea repeated the psammead's wish, and it blew itself out to a larger size than they had yet seen it attain.

"And now," it said as it collapsed, "can I do anything more for you?"

"Just one thing, and I think that clears everything up, doesn't it, Jane? I wish Martha to forget about the diamond ring, and mother to forget about the keeper cleaning the windows."

"It's like Anstey's 'Brass Bottle,'" said Jane.

"Yes; I'm glad we had that or I should never have thought of it."

"Now," said the psammead, faintly, "I'm almost worn out. Is there anything else?"

"No; only thank you kindly for all you've done for us, and I hope you'll have a good, long sleep, and I hope we shall see you again some day."

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"Is that a wish?" it said, in a weak voice.

"Yes, please," said the two girls together.

Then, for the last time, they saw the psammead blow itself out and collapse suddenly. It nodded to them, blinked its long snail's eyes, burrowed and disappeared, scratching fiercely to the last, and the sand closed over it.

"So you see it's all right," Jane whispered. "She doesn't remember."

"No more does Martha," said Anthea, who had been to ask after the state of the kettle.

As the servants sat at their tea, Beale, the gamekeeper, dropped in. He brought the welcome news that Lady Chittenden's jewels had not been lost at all. Lord



"IT BURROWED AND DISAPPEARED, SCRATCHING FIERCELY TO THE LAST."

"I hope we've done right," said Jane.

"I'm sure we have," said Anthea; "come on home and tell the boys."

Anthea found Cyril glooming over his paper boats and told him. Jane told Robert. The two tales were only just ended when mother walked in, hot and dusty. She explained that as she was being driven into Rochester to buy the girls' autumn school dresses the axle had broken, and but for the narrowness of the lane and the high, soft hedges she would have been thrown out. As it was she was not hurt, but she had had to walk home. "And oh, my dearest, dear chicks," she said, "I am simply dying for a cup of tea. Do run and see if the kettle boils!"

Chittenden had taken them to be reset and cleaned, and the maid who knew about it had gone for a holiday. So that was all right.

"I wonder if we ever shall see the sammyadd again?" said Jane, wistfully, as they walked in the garden while mother was putting the Lamb to bed.

"I'm sure we shall," said Cyril, "if you really wished it."

"We've promised never to ask it for another wish," said Anthea.

"I never want to," said Robert, earnestly.

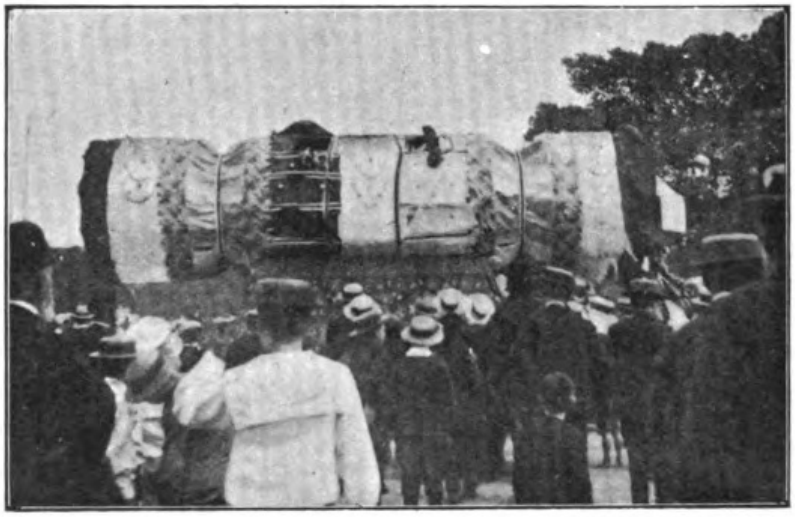
They did see the psammead again, of course, but not in this story. And it was not in a sandpit either, but in a very, very, very different place. It was in a——but I must say no more.

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*Curiosities.**

[*We shall be glad to receive Contributions to this section, and to pay for such as are accepted.*]

A MONSTER CHRISTMAS CRACKER.



"The immense cracker shown in my photograph was carried by the confectioners in the 'eight hours' procession in Sydney, Australia. The length was twenty-five feet and the diameter six feet three inches. It was made by Mr. Alexander Wyatt, president of the Confectioners' Union. The boy in the opening is engaged in distributing the contents of the cracker—a ton of sweets (over twenty thousand bags)—to the crowd along the route."—Master Lionel Walcot, 52, Ebley Street, Waverley, near Sydney.

AN INTERNATIONAL SNOW MAN.

"There is perhaps no place in the whole wide world where the long hours of the dreary winter drag more slowly than in the mid-land of the New North of America, the vast waste of ice and snow-covered wilderness broken only at very irregular intervals by straggling settlements that in the rush of the short-lived summer are boastful cities in embryo, but which, with the falling of the mercury to 50deg. and 60deg. below zero, are but halting-places for the men of iron mould who trek it over the river-ice to or from Dawson City. The coming of these, the daily arrival and departure of the stage up or down the solid-frozen Yukon, and the consideration of the comparative merits of dog teams make up the entire chapter of winter life from Whitehorse, the railway terminus, through to the Klondike goldfields, five hundred miles or more of bleak, inhospitable desolation. Nowhere in the broad and busy world are the contributory elements of suicidal melancholia more in evidence, and when an enterprising resident of The Summit proposed some few months ago that the entire population of the boundary post 'turn out and build a snow man,' his ennui-breaking suggestion was hailed with glad approval, albeit the overworked thermometer showed minus 52deg., and the comforts of life upon the mountain tops that mark the provisional international boundary are notably inconspicuous in fact. The people of the American western and northern wonderland do nothing incompletely; hence their snow man takes precedence over all other snow men that yet have been. He calmly guards the peak on which there are flying side by side the significant banners of Great Britain and the United States, looking serenely down upon a sea of snowy ridges and a rugged wilderness of valley through which the world's northernmost railway crawls from cliff to precipice in manner most uncanny. The snow man is himself a trifle reminiscent of bygone days of giants upon the earth, for from base to crown he stands thirty-two feet six inches high, a glittering and conspicuous, if scarcely an artistic, figure. As the blocks of snow were piled in place, water (readily obtained by melting the convenient snow) was used with prodigal liberality until the snow man became in truth a man of ice, and lasting as other ice formations in these latitudes. The fancy of the architect has made him Janus-headed, and when imagination is coerced to aid the eye the features of the serene and silent sentinel of the snowy summit are recognised as those of His Majesty King Edward overlooking the British domain and of Uncle Sam on the American side."—Mr. C. H. Gibbons, Editor *Vancouver World*, Vancouver, B.C.



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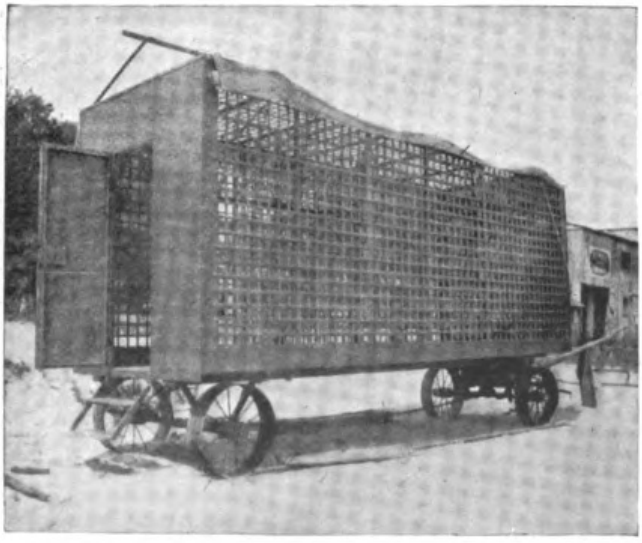


A LUCKY SNAP-SHOT.

"This curious snap-shot was taken on Southsea Common with an ordinary quarter-plate hand camera. I happened to be passing and noticed the man going up rather high. Thinking it would make a good picture, I took a snap and managed to get the man just as he was going over the top."—Mr. V. Le C. Binet, 2, Bond Street, Jersey.

A CAGE FOR HUMAN BEINGS.

"This cage is not intended for wild animals, as might be supposed from its appearance, but is used to confine human beings. The convicts are made to work upon the public highways, and in order to work the roads at any great distance from the county gaol it is necessary for the



prisoners to camp out, so this steel car was constructed for the purpose of confining the convicts while working in the outlying districts. The cage is twenty feet long by eight feet six inches wide, and is eight feet high from floor to roof. It is divided into two compartments; the larger one, for the prisoners, contains twelve bunks, and the smaller one has two bunks for the guards. The whole thing requires six horses to pull it over the country roads."—Mr. V. W. Gould, Deland, Florida.

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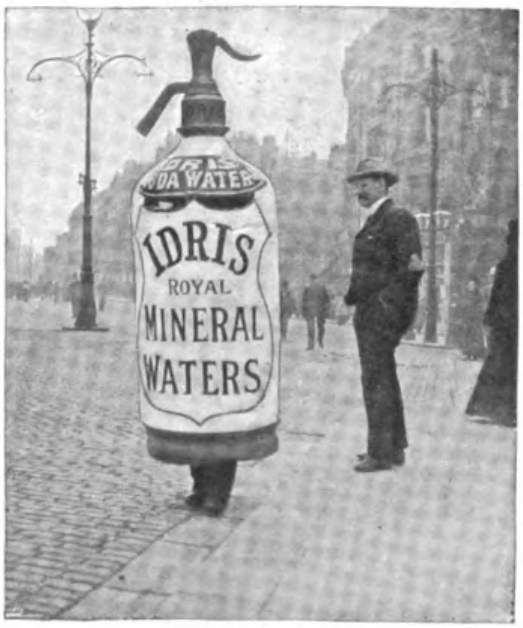


THE MISSING LINK.

"I took this photograph with a No. 1 Eastman's Pocket Kodak in our grounds at Fairview. It is a photograph of myself, and for some reason or other the picture came out in this way."—Mr. C. G. Clute, New Westminster, British Columbia.

A NOVEL ADVERTISING DEVICE.

"Almost everyone has heard of 'Idris' mineral waters, but, for the benefit of those who have not, the proprietors have hit upon a novel plan for attracting the notice of prospective purchasers. The device does not require much explanation, for a glance at the photo. will reveal the ingenuity of the idea. The huge siphon dawdling along the footpath at the rate of two

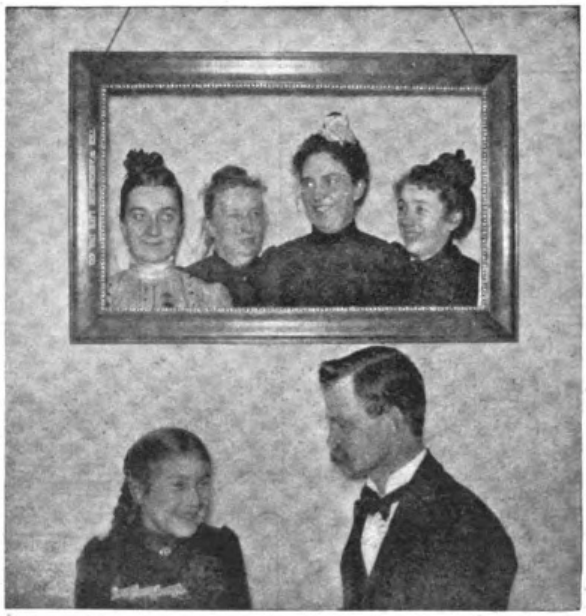


and a half miles an hour is a sight not easily forgotten."—Mr. C. Chaddock, 80, Percy Street, Bootle, Liverpool.

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AN INGENIOUS LIVING-PICTURE PHOTOGRAPH.

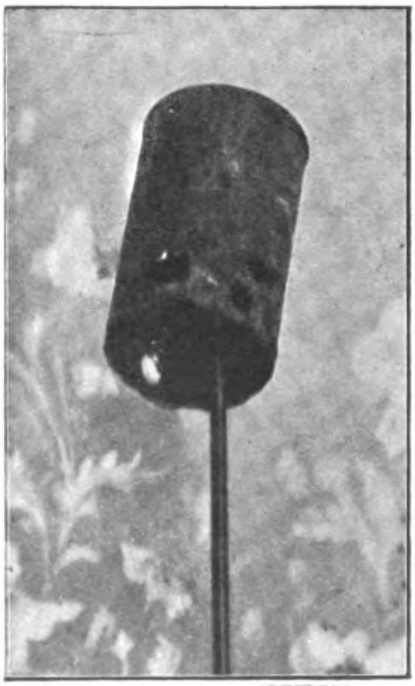
"The picture represents a unique idea of illustrating 'living pictures,' the group at the top having the appearance of a photograph suspended from the wall. The effect was secured by hanging an open picture-frame, by means of the usual picture cord, in a double doorway, allowing a pair of white sheets to hang so that the edges would be just over the edges of the frame, a third sheet being suspended just at the back of the group having their likenesses taken, in order to hide all furn ture or other objects which might show through the opening.



Thus life-size pictures may be shown with others in the foreground with all the appearance of an ordinary picture." — Mr. W. C. Bouk, 3,026, South Nineteenth Street, Omaha.

WILL SOMEONE EXPLAIN?

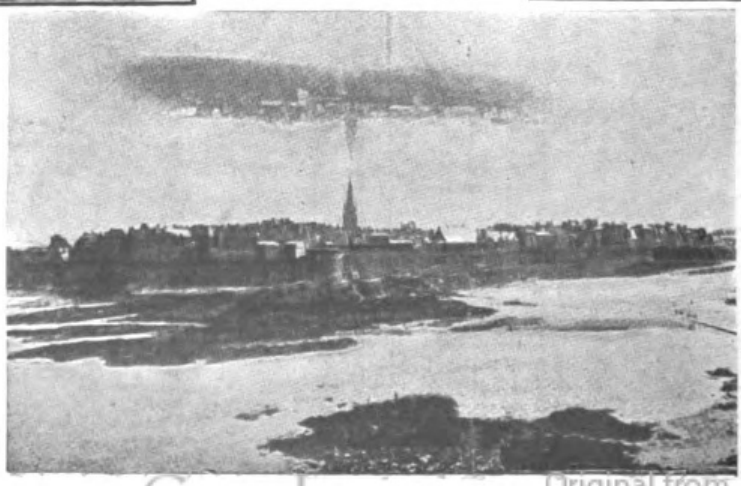
"I think your readers might be interested in an experience of mine. The other day I was testing a rook rifle. I placed an empty tin on a stick and fired at eighty yards. I heard the bullet strike and saw the tin revolving slowly, but out of the perpendicular. On examination I found no fewer than four distinct holes through the can—two entering and two issuing (as shown by the jagged tear of holes). I was so puzzled that I tried again with another canister, and with the same result! I am forwarding a print of a photo. of the can, and



I shall be grateful for any suggested theory as to how one bullet can make more than two holes (one in and one out) in a canister at eighty yards."—Mr. Herbert Greg, Breingorton, Colintraive, Argyllshire.

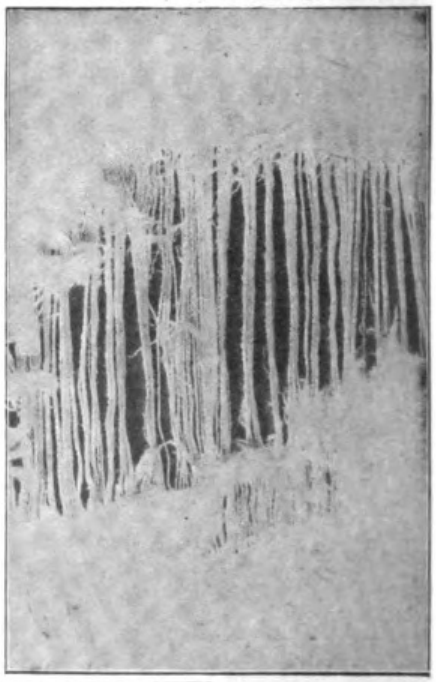
A WONDERFUL MIRAGE.

"The extraordinary picture of a mirage which I send you represents an event which actually took place at St. Malo on August the 15th, when even wheeled vehicles could be seen up above moving upside down. The excitement in St. Malo was so great that religious processions and services were immediately organized. It is not often that so interesting a photograph is secured."—Mr. Thomas Norman, 3, Sussex Terrace, Wood Green, N.



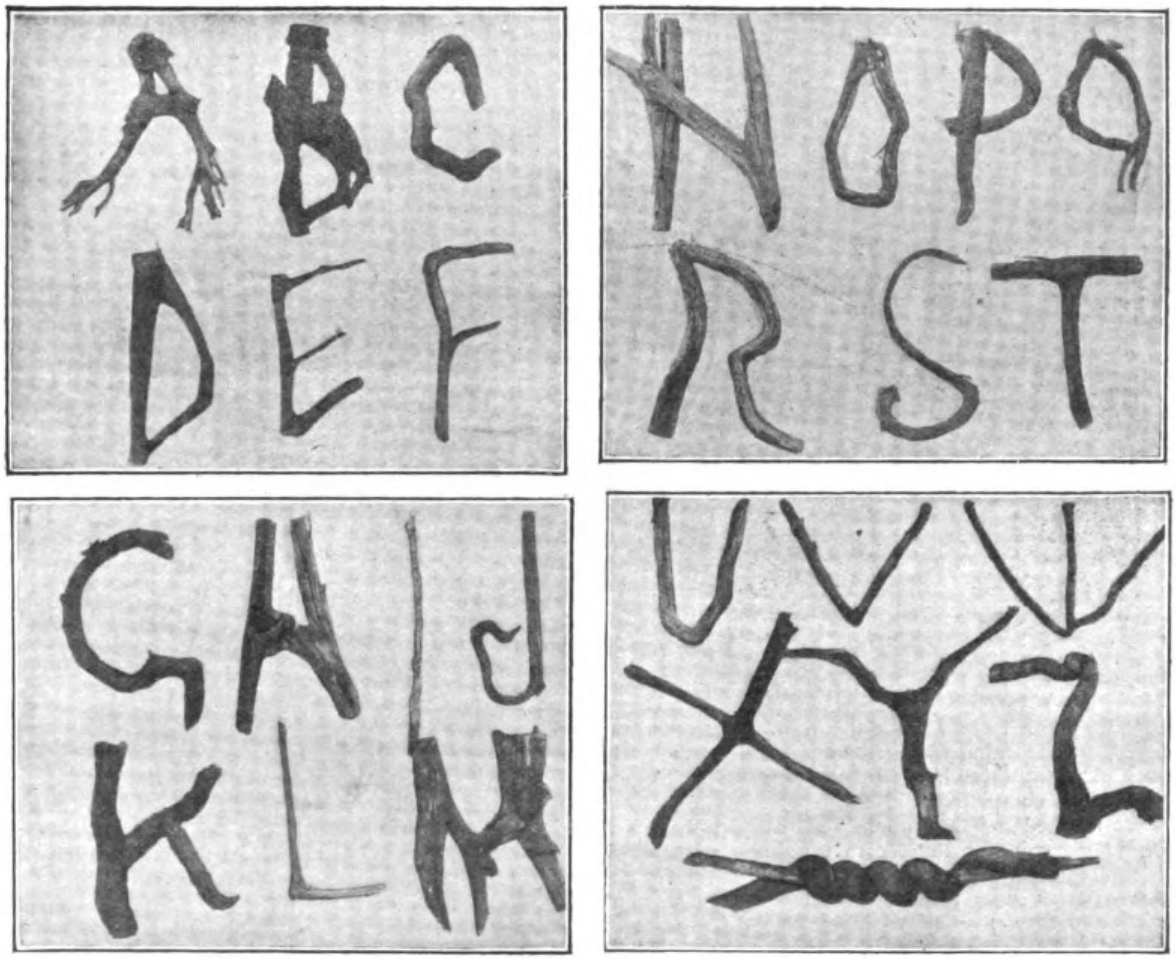
THE POWER OF COMPRESSED AIR.

"I send you a curious photo. showing the force of compressed air. It is of a cheviot shirt worn by a student while making a series of tests in which compressed air was



used. Air under a pressure of five pounds was coming out of a two-inch orifice. As the student leaned over, the shirt came in front of the orifice, causing the result shown. The horizontal threads were torn out, leaving the vertical threads."—Mr. Donald G. Robbins, 33, Mulberry Street, Springfield, Mass.

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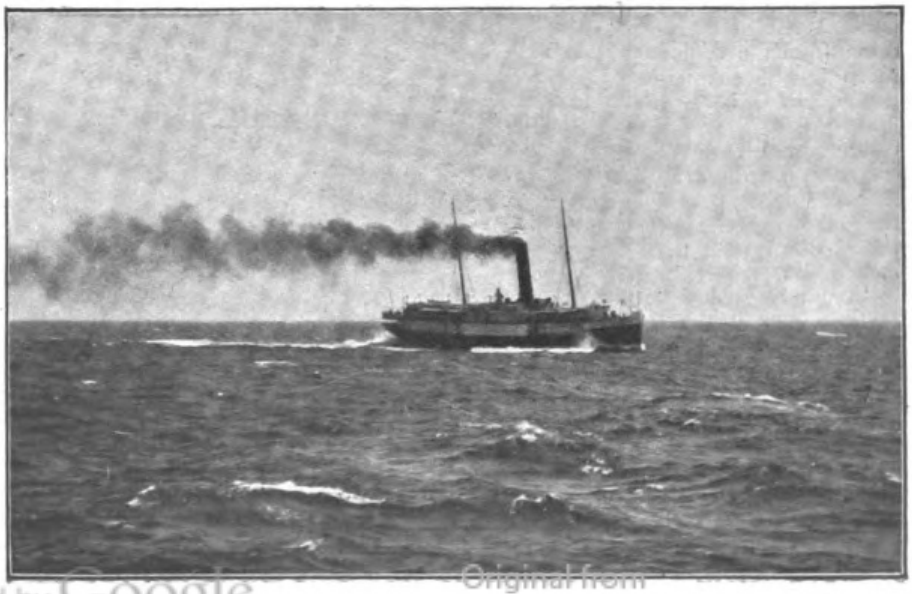


A WOODEN ALPHABET.

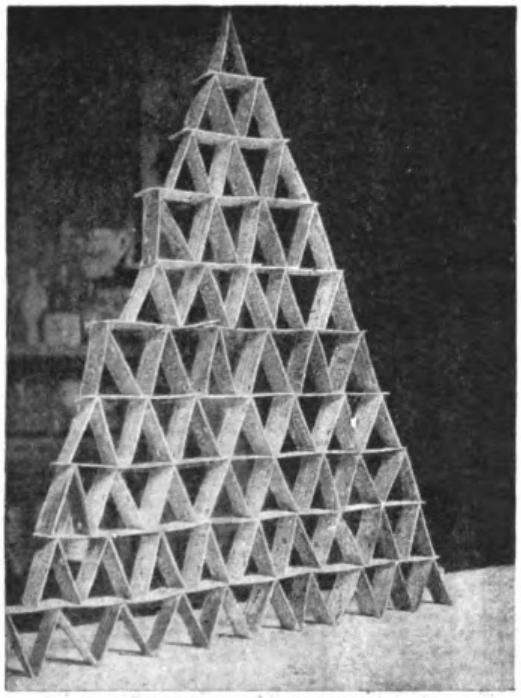
"The letters in this curious alphabet are all of wood, chiefly twisted roots of the blue gum, and have not been altered in any way from their original growth; three girls collected them in their daily walks or rides for a period of six months, and the specimens were found in various places; frequently one was carried home on horseback for many miles. All are about two feet high. The 'B' was the last found, and when the young ladies had almost despaired of ever getting one it was found in a heap of driftwood caught against a tree in the river."—Miss Cave, Vergemont, Clontreagh, Co. Dublin.

WHICH WAY IS SHE GOING?

In a recent issue we published a photograph of a man on horseback in such a position that the reader was left to judge whether the animal was moving away when the picture was taken or coming toward the camera. Here is another photograph of the same kind. "The picture of the steamboat was taken from the deck of another vessel, but the two are not headed in the same direction. The one in the picture is either approaching the vessel from which the photograph was taken or leaving it. Which is she doing? A passenger who had just come on deck at the time the picture was taken made a bet that the ship was approaching—but lost it, for, as a matter of fact, she was rapidly going away from it."—Mr. D. Allen Willey, Baltimore.



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A TOWER OF TRAM-TICKETS.

"My brother and I made this tram-ticket tower on a very wet morning while staying at the seaside. It took us nearly three hours to complete. It fell twice when half completed, and again for the third time when finished and the camera was nearly ready. We began it again for the fourth time and succeeded. I send you a photograph of it, and it may interest your readers to know that we used a hundred and fifty-five tram-tickets in all." — Master G. Holzapfel, care of Mrs. Hawe, Boys' High School, Croydon.

HOW TO MAKE THE MOST OF A SMALL ROOM.

"This is a photo. of my room, to which a great number of Cape Town people have made a pilgrimage. The room was small, so to gain space I have suspended everything from the ceiling by cords with counterpoises. In this way I have the floor space clear; the corners of the room are fitted up as 'cosy corners,' and the following can be pulled down from the ceiling as required: dressing-table, shaving-table, washstand, stove, ash-trays, pipe, cards, and chairs. Cords from the bed open and shut the windows and door, operate a musical-box, and bring a trolley from the window containing coffee, etc. And, by the way, my bed is behind the curtain on the left of the picture, with a bath-room underneath."—Mr. Richard B. Sainsbury, 133, Longmarket Street, Cape Town.





A WAGGISH WORKMAN.

"I am sending you a photograph taken at the W. L. Douglas Shoe Factory at Brockton, Mass., U.S.A., by one of our men. At the first glance this looks like an enormous pair of trousers, but in reality it is a section of the blow-pipe which is used to carry dirt and dust away from the factory."—Mr. F. E. Erskine, Brockton, Mass.

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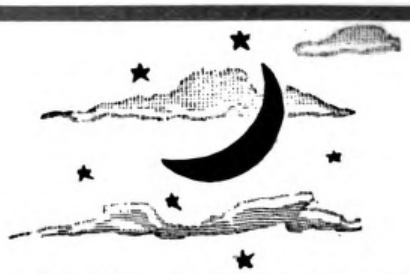
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IMPROVED WHITE SHIRTS with Reversible Cuffs, Beautifully Laundried and Ready for IMMEDIATE Wear, scientifically cut and carefully finished, with all the latest improvements, in fine selected linens. Each shirt is fitted with reversible cuffs, which enables them to be worn twice, and the wearer thus obtains practically two shirts for the price of one. In ordering please state size of collar. Made in two qualities:—

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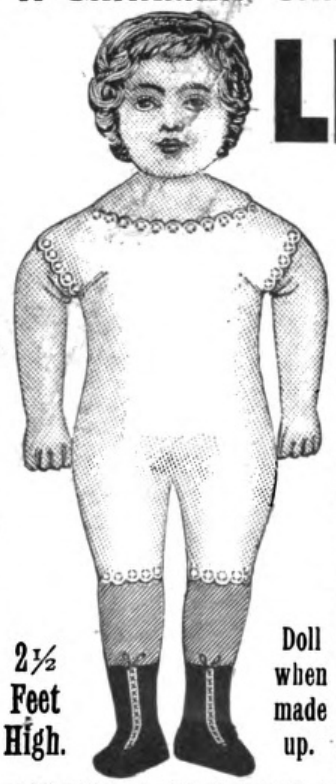


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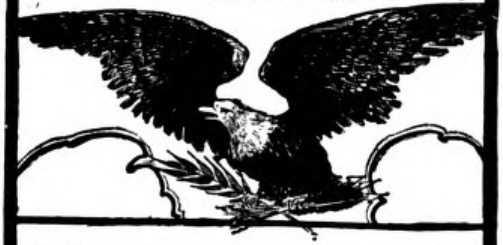
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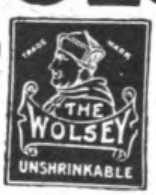
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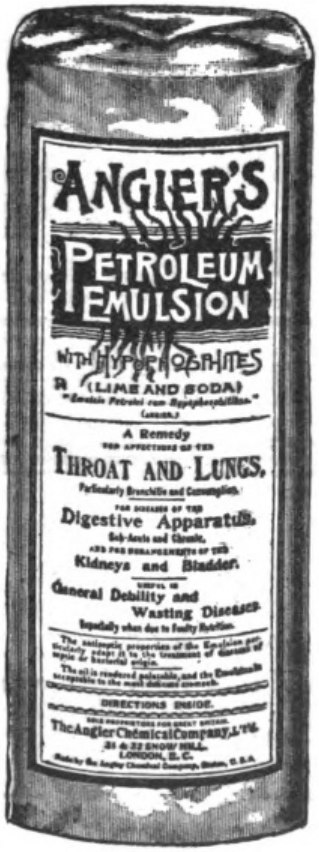
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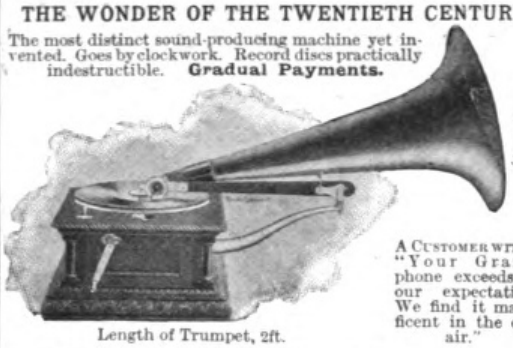
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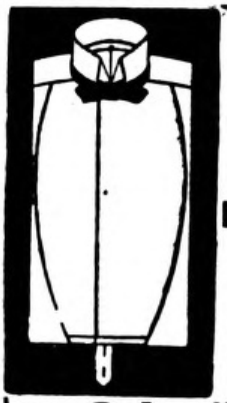
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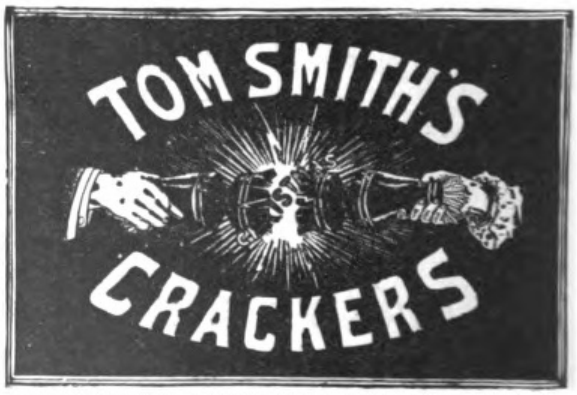
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NESTOR GIANACLIS—
CAIRO).

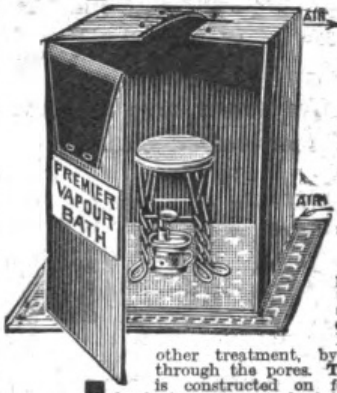
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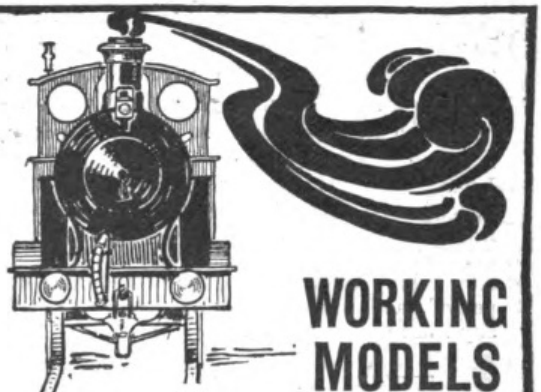
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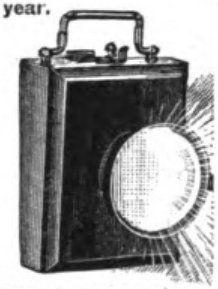
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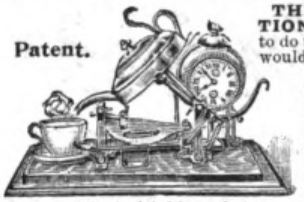
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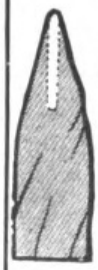
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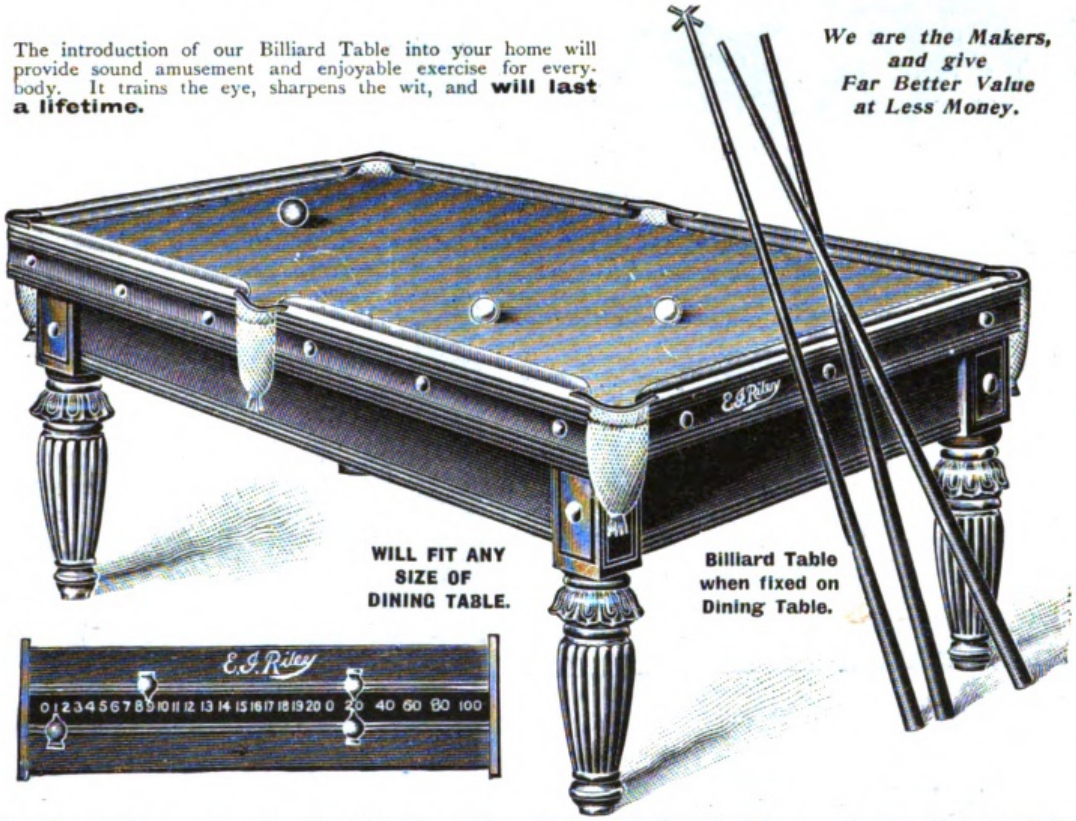
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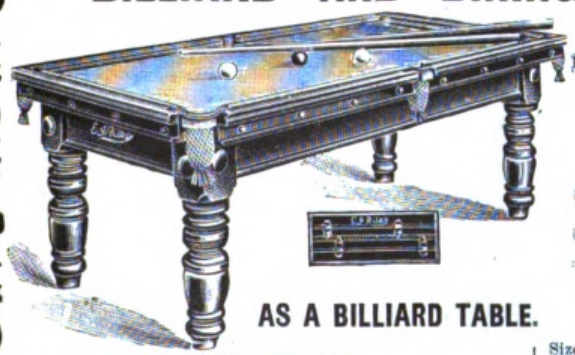
SIZE.	CASH PRICE.	
4ft. 4in. by 2ft. 4in.	**£4 10 0**	or at **8/-** per month.
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BILLIARD AND DINING TABLES COMBINED.



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AS A DINING TABLE.

CARRIAGE PAID.

In **Solid Mahogany**, with Dining Table Top in one or more pieces. Instantaneous action for raising and lowering. To those who cannot devote a room especially for Billiards this Table is highly recommended for a perfect game.

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Perfectly Harmless, Colourless, Sweetly Perfumed; is not sticky or greasy, but keeps the Hair in Curl for days.

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LANTERNS and every kind of apparatus connected therewith, of the most modern patterns, on hire or sale. Cash or instalments. Send for lists, Gratis and Post Free, and read about the

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Wear Twice as Long as Ordinary Shirts.

Their economic advantages are apparent at a glance. By permitting the shirt to be worn twice with absolutely fresh cuffs each time they reduce the laundry bill by one-half, and the shirts with less frequent washing wear twice as long. The invention has commended itself to hundreds of thousands of customers all over the world.

Sample Shirts from factory—unlaundred—in following styles **3/9** post free.

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Style 1. With reversible cuffs.
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Cuff first day. Cuff second day.

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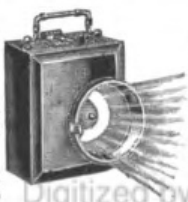
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All other Rubber Heels have a tendency to SLIP on damp pavements, which is dangerous. "PENNA" Heels have a device making them impossible to slip. They have the same advantages as all other rubber heels, wear as long, are lighter, relieve the NERVES, COST LESS, are easier fitted to any boots old or new, and DO NOT SLIP. A REST to the FEET.

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DRINK AND DRUG HABITS AND RESULTANT NERVOUS DISEASES

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of Carpets, Hearthrugs, Overmantels, Bedsteads, Bedding, Furniture, Table Linen, Curtains, &c., post free, if mentioning "The Strand" (1/12/02) when writing.

The Queen's Royal
HEARTHRUGS
(Registered),
6ft. by 3ft., **2/-** each.
Postage, 6d. extra.
SPECIAL OFFER.
3 for **5/9**; 6 for **11/3**; 12 for **22/-**.



Patronized by Royalty.

Real Brussels
HEARTHRUGS
(Registered),
6ft. by 3ft., **4/11** each.
Postage, 7d. extra.
SPECIAL OFFER.
3 for **14/6.**

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Gigantic Sale of the "Queen's Royal" Household Reversible Rich Turkey Pattern

CARPETS (Regd.)

Trade Mark on all Goods. Beware of Imitations.

ADMITTEDLY THE CHEAPEST IN THE WORLD. Woven without seam. Altogether superior quality, with handsome border to correspond. A marvel for excellence and beauty. Thousands of repeat orders and testimonials received, giving the highest satisfaction. When ordering, please mention if for Bed, Dining, Drawing, or Sitting Room, and any particular colour preferred.

REDUCED SALE PRICES.

6 ft. by 6 ft.	4/11	9 ft. by 13½ ft.	16/6
6 ft. by 7½ ft.	6/-	10½ ft by 12 ft.	18/-
6 ft. by 9 ft.	7/6	9 ft. by 15 ft.	19/6
8 ft. by 9 ft.	9/-	12 ft. by 12 ft.	21/-
6 ft. by 12 ft.	10/6	12 ft. by 13½ ft.	22/-
9 ft. by 9 ft.	11/-	12 ft. by 15 ft.	25/6
9 ft. by 10½ ft.	13/6	12 ft. by 18 ft.	30/-
9 ft. by 12 ft.	15/-	12 ft. by 21 ft.	35/6

Black Mount, Tyndrum, N.B., November 24th.
Lord Breadalbane writes:—"Will feel obliged by Mr. Hodgson sending to above address two more of the 'Queen's Royal' Carpets, 9 ft. by 10½ ft. Cheque £2 1s. 6d. enclosed."

GREAT SALE OF BRITISH

BRUSSELS CARPETS.

Extraordinarily Heavy, very Best Quality, Newest and Choicest Designs. In Old Gold, Sultan, Terra Cotta, Crimson, Sky, Navy, and the latest colours. With handsome border to correspond. Guaranteed to wear for years and give every satisfaction. The sizes and prices as follows (all ready for putting down):

REDUCED SALE PRICE LIST.

Real Brussels Carpet Squares.

4½ ft. by 6 ft.	7/11	11 ft. by 12 ft.	33/9
6 ft. by 9 ft.	12/6	12 ft. by 13½ ft.	40/6
7½ ft. by 9 ft.	16/6	12 ft. by 16 ft.	47/6
9 ft. by 9 ft.	20/3	12 ft. by 18 ft.	54/-
9 ft. by 10½ ft.	23/6	13½ ft. by 22½ ft.	86/-
9 ft. by 12 ft.	27/-		

When ordering, please mention if for Bed, Dining, Drawing, or Sitting Room, and any particular colour preferred.

Also **Real Brussels Stair Carpets,** bordered to match, 18in. wide, **1/6** per yard; 22½in. wide, **1/9** per yard; 27in. wide, **2/1** per yard.
Crosswell Terrace, Sunderland, January 27th.
Mrs. H. Jameson writes:—"I am very much pleased with the Brussels Carpet and Hearthrug, which arrived safe last week, and would feel obliged by you forwarding the following order. Remittance £1 15s. 7d."

To Readers of THE STRAND MAGAZINE 1/12/1902. Offered



A STOCK OF 10,000 PATENT ODOURLESS WADDED BED QUILTS
(as illustration), at an enormous reduction to clear out.
SALE PRICE **3/6**
Postage, **6d.** extra. Covered with beautiful soft Oriental Sateen Chintz, and on reverse side another beautiful floral design, size 56 by 60in.
Special Offer: 3 Quilts for **10/-**, or 6 for **19/6**, or 12 for **38/-**.

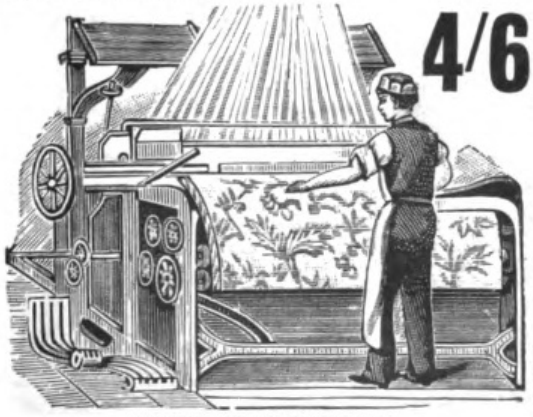
TESTIMONIAL.—Hove, Brighton, October 19th. The Countess Elizabeth of Winchilsea and Nottingham writes:—"Received the Bed Quilts, with which she is very much pleased, and requests Messrs. F. Hodgson and Sons to send six more, pretty, light colours; cheque enclosed."

***Re* SHAW & CO. Bankruptcy, late of 6, Love Lane, Cheapside, London.**

F. Hodgson & Sons, of Leeds, have purchased for cash, from the Official Trustee, the whole of the Stock at a discount of 55½ per cent. off cost prices. The Stock consists of Carpets, Hearthrugs, Quilts, Curtains, Table-Covers, Bed Spreads, Squares, Linens, Alhambra Quilts, Silks, Blankets, Furs, Jackets, Dress Cloths, Skirts, Mackintoshes, and general Furnishing Goods.

Special Sale Catalogue of the general stock offered at a great sacrifice for immediate realization will be sent post free to any address if, when writing, mentioning "The Strand Magazine" Coupon, 1/12/02, F. Hodgson & Sons having purchased the whole of the above Stock, Business, Goodwill, and Effects, from the Official Trustee in Bankruptcy.

All Cheques, Orders, and future communications must be addressed to F. Hodgson & Sons (Dept. S), Manufacturers, Importers, and Merchants, Woodsley Road, Leeds.



4/6

To readers of "The Strand Magazine," 1/12/1902, on receipt of Postal Order or Stamps, value 4/6 (Regd.), we will send you the **Largest Genuine Reversible Carpet in Brussels Finish, with Rug,** ever sold at the Price direct from the Looms to any address on receipt of amount. Suitable for Drawing-room, Dining-room, Bedroom, etc., bordered and woven in Brussels Patterns, as an advertisement for our goods, thus saving any middle profit. Remember these are woven, and are made of a material almost equal to wool. Thousands of these carpets have been already sold at double these prices

SPECIAL OFFER.—2 CARPETS and 2 RUGS, 8s.

The Prudential **BRUSSELETTE CARPETS** Admittedly the Marvel of the Age.

Woven and Reversible, Rich Brussels and Turkey Patterns and Colourings, superior quality, with handsome border to match. A Marvel of Excellence and Beauty. These Carpets are superb imitations of Real Brussels, and, except by the closest scrutiny, the difference cannot be detected.

REDUCED SALE PRICES.

6 ft. by 6 ft.	2/11 each.	10½ ft. by 12 ft.	11/6 each.
6 ft. by 7½ ft.	3/11 "	9 ft. by 15 ft.	12/6 "
6 ft. by 9 ft.	4/9 "	12 ft. by 12 ft.	12/9 "
7½ ft. by 9 ft.	5/11 "	12 ft. by 13½ ft.	14/3 "
9 ft. by 9 ft.	7/8 "	12 ft. by 15 ft.	15/9 "
9 ft. by 10½ ft.	8/6 "	12 ft. by 18 ft.	19/6 "
9 ft. by 12 ft.	9/6 "	12 ft. by 21 ft.	22/6 "

DIRECT FROM THE LOOM.

When ordering, please mention if for Bed, Dining, Drawing, or Sitting Room, and any particular colour preferred.

A PRUDENTIAL Brusselette Hearthrug (Regd.), to match above Carpets, sent for 1/6 extra, size 2yds. long and 1yd. wide. SPECIAL OFFER.—Three Hearthrugs for 4/3, or Six for 8/-. Sterling Value.

Blairquhan, Maybole, N.B., August 3rd.
Lady Hunter Blair writes:—"Will Messrs. F. Hodgson & Sons send her another 'Prudential' Brusselette Carpet same as before, crimson and gold, dimensions 9 ft. by 10½ ft.? Cheque enclosed."

Stockton House, Godford St. Mary, Wilts, January 24th, 1902.
Lady Clan-William writes:—"The 'Prudential' Brusselette Carpets have arrived, and are quite satisfactory."
Her further orders are sent with cheque.

Cheques and P.O.'s payable to—

F. HODGSON & SONS (Dept. S), **Manufacturers, Importers, and Merchants, Woodsley Road, LEEDS.**

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DISCOUNT FOR CASH, OR CREDIT TERMS ARRANGED.
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We make the **KNIVES** of the **BEST SHEFFIELD STEEL**, and they are splendidly finished with **"IVORETTE"** Handles, a most perfect reproduction of the Finest African Ivory; and we guarantee the **SPOONS AND FORKS** to keep their colour and to wear equal to Sterling Silver. Made entirely of "COLUMBIAN" SILVER—they have an appearance equal to the Finest Plate.

The "ENTERPRISE" PARCEL

CONTAINS:
6 Table Knives, 6 Table Forks, 6 Dessert Knives, 6 Dessert Forks, 6 Dessert Spoons, 6 Tea Spoons, 1 pair Sugar Tongs, 2 Table Spoons, 1 Moist Sugar Spoon, 6 Egg Spoons, 2 Mustard Spoons, 2 Salt Spoons, 1 Pickle Fork.

If you can't afford cash down, send 5/-, and you complete purchase in five more monthly payments of 4/-; or, HANDSOME BONUS PRESENT for cash payment. If not satisfied, return the goods, and we refund your deposit at once.

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AGENTS WANTED everywhere to sell our Goods. Good Pay. Write for terms and particulars.

51 pieces for 25/-

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J. G. GRAVES, 12, DIVISION ST., SHEFFIELD.



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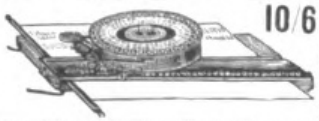
The Musical Indicator enables anyone entirely ignorant of Music to play the Piano or Harmonium beautifully by ear, and to vamp to Songs in all keys in One Week. Post free, **1/9.**



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or New Musical Wonder. Most comical instrument on earth. 10,000 cat-power. Causes roars of laughter. Anyone can play it. Post free, **1/8.** W. RITCHIE (A.F.), Radnor Drive, Liscard, Cheshire.

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10/6 The **Siecle** gets through its work the same as a **£20 machine. Portable and Compact.** Complete range of characters, **easy to operate.** Takes paper of any size. Price **10/6** each, post free. Catalogue of Novelties and Cheap Typewriters post free.—**VARIETY CO., Baltimore House, Fassett Square, Dalston, London.**



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A practicable, portable Boot Tree. Light, Strong, and easily adjusted. Folds up into small space for convenience when travelling.

The Most Practicable Tree on the Market.

Solid Wood, **3/11**; Hollow Wood, **4/11**; Aluminium, **10/6.**

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equal many Havana brands and cost only half the price. Their delicate aroma, palatable flavour, and the even-smoking qualities of the fine silky leaf Tobacco from which they are made—1900 crop, the best yet produced in Borneo—place them first in the estimation of critical judges. By dealing direct with smokers, we save them all intermediate profits.

REGALIAS (ordinary size) **10/6** per 50
" " **20/-** " 100
IMPERIALES (extra large) **15/-** " 50

Carriage paid. Duty free. State preference for Mild Medium, or Full Flavour. Remittance with order.

POST FREE *We shall be pleased to send case containing 5 cigars as testing samples for 12 penny stamps. Sole address:—*

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Made to Measure.



Write for Patterns. Sent FREE.

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Russian Blouse Coat and Skirt complete *(as above sketch),* **45/-** to measure.
SMARTLY CUT AND WELL FINISHED.
Patterns & Sketches sent Post Free to Country Applicants, with Self-measurement Form.
Please mention THE STRAND MAGAZINE when writing.
PERFECT FIT ASSURED.
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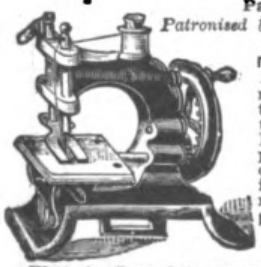
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THIS machine does work which will bear comparison with that of other machines costing higher prices. Entirely made of metal, with plated fittings, improved stitch regulator, etc. It works at great speed. It has no complications like the old-fashioned intricate machines, therefore no experience is required. It works fine and coarse materials equally as well.

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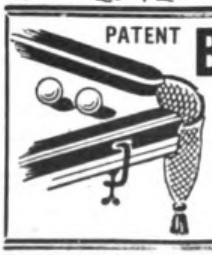
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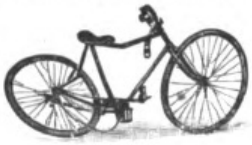


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Of Chemists, &c., at **1/-** and **2/6** per box.

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Martins' Cigar Outfit, 24/-

Every smoker should possess this outfit. It consists of **a box of Small Cigars, a box of Medium-size Cigars, and a box of Large Cigars,** so that he may suit his own or his friends' taste at any time. The three boxes in the outfit are :—

1 Box 25 "Avec Vous" Liliputanos.
A Small Cigar for odd moments.

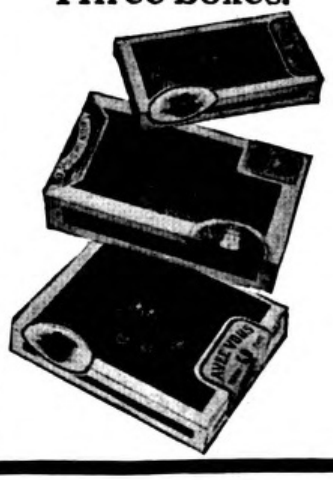
1 Box 50 "Lord Byron."
A Medium-size Havana Cigar for ordinary use.

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A Large After-dinner Cigar.

Total 100 Cigars at a cost of less than 3d. each.

The mildness of these Cigars, and their breadth, mellowness and aroma, all grow upon the smoker, until he finds himself hurrying over his meals in order to get his smoke !

This is the Outfit: Three boxes.



These are the Cigars (actual size) in the Outfit.

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Goodness is concentrated in this Cigar. It is mild, with a rich, soft flavour, and is made from the finest Borneo leaf. Also sold apart from the outfit at

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Mr. Stone is the only physical instructor paying special attention to women and children. He is ably assisted in this department by Mrs. Howard, who has had a very extensive experience, and who alone opens and answers letters of a private nature. Confidential letters may be addressed "**Mrs. Howard, c/o the Stone School.**"

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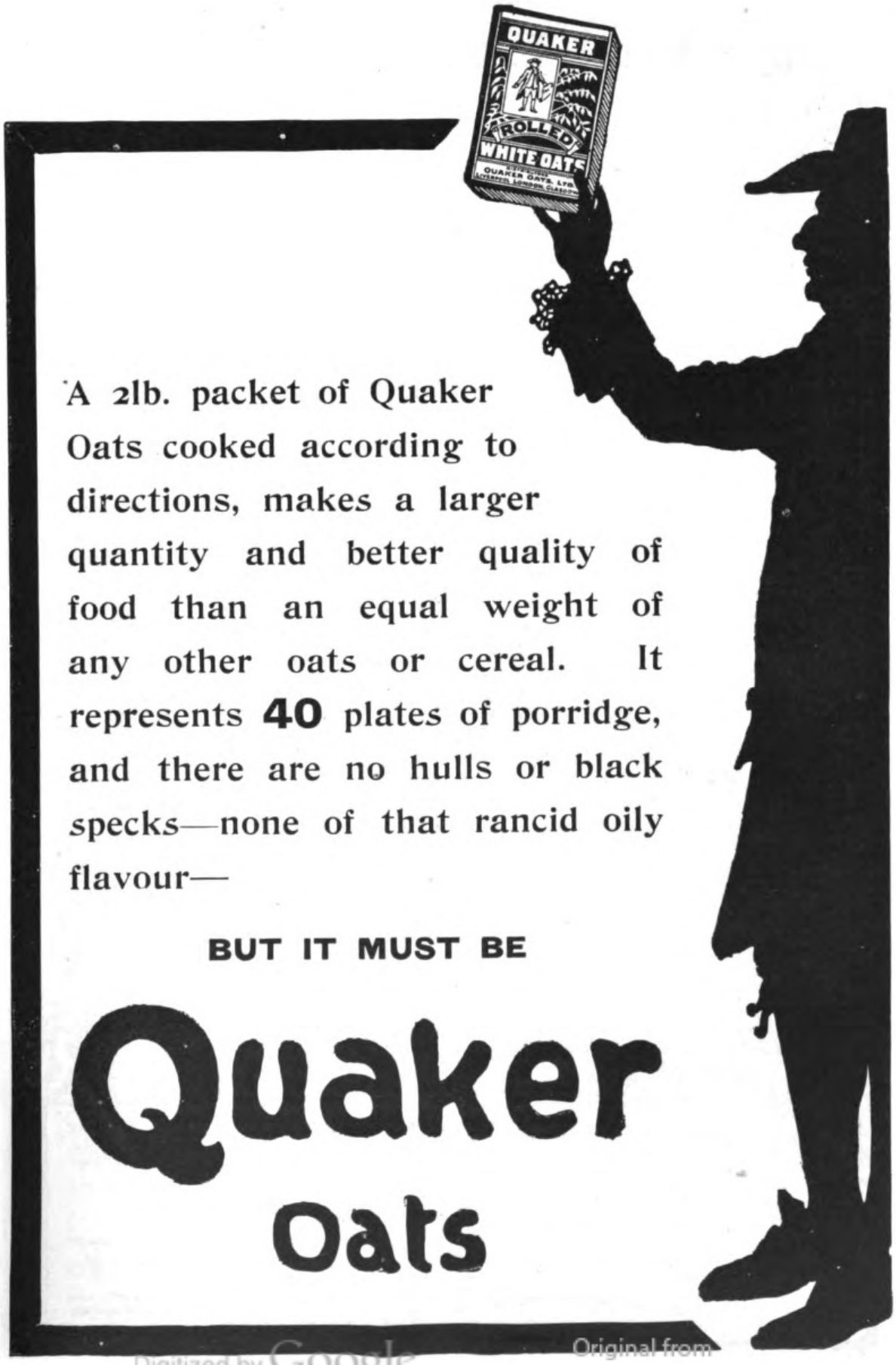
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COMBINING CURATIVE PROPERTIES WITH CONSTANT RELIEF

Cased in 9-carat Gold, 21/- EACH

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Or of all Principal Jewellers and Chemists.

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like a dance without music IS SPIRITLESS



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Remarkable Discovery that will interest every woman with superfluous hair. Perfectly safe treatment that permanently destroys the roots, fully described, FREE TO ALL.

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The Company want it understood that this method is different entirely from the many powders, lotions, and cosmetics sold that only remove temporarily and hurt a delicate skin, while this new method removes the hair for all time, and is **SIMPLE AND HARMLESS.**

It is a home treatment that any lady can easily use in her private apartments, and will permanently remove superfluous hair without pain.

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The description is mailed to you free in a perfectly plain and sealed envelope, and you should have no hesitancy in writing. You will be delighted to learn how easily and surely superfluous hair can be permanently and painlessly removed, *and it will pay you to write to-day. Don't neglect to do so.*

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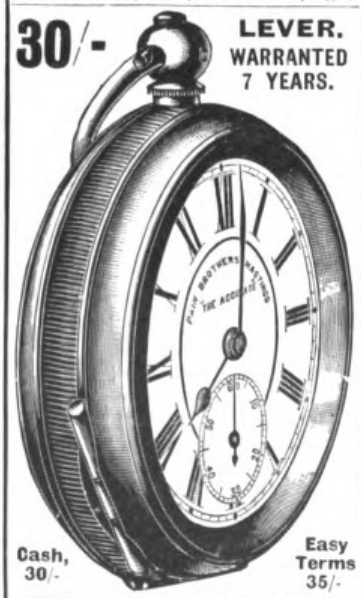
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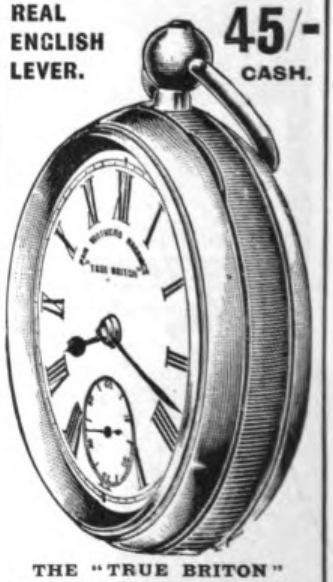
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Chimes the ½, ¼, & ¾ hours, and plays several bars of 'Home, Sweet Home,' at the hours.



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11/3 Cash with order.

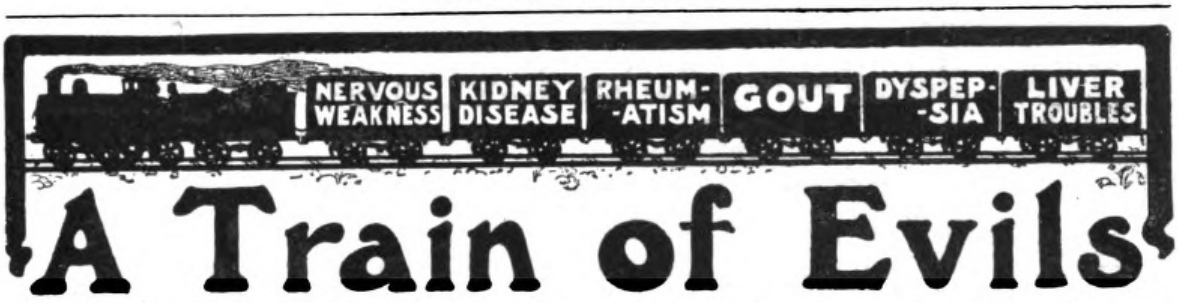
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A Train of Evils

follows in the wake of lost nerve power, or impaired vitality produced by a variety of causes, and from which so many tens of thousands of men and women are suffering at the present time. *Excess of work, excess of worry, excess of emotion, excess of pleasure, excess of strain* of any sort will produce it, and it, in turn, gives rise to a series of symptoms as distressing as they are often alarming, even though the sufferer is not confined to bed, but goes about his ordinary work.

Among the symptoms of this nervous breakdown, which, unless taken in time, may lead to complete prostration and even death, are palpitation of the heart, noises in the ears, fatigue, mental and physical, on the least exertion, a feeling of being beaten all over on awakening, sleeplessness, loss of memory, dizziness, giddiness, cold hands and feet, pins and needles in the legs, pains in the back, which often feels as if it would break in two, a pale complexion due to poorness of blood, neuralgia, a feeling of pressure or cold on the top of the head, or as if an iron band were screwed tight round it, pain and tenderness behind the ears, floating spots or flashes of light before the eyes, pain in the right side or in the chest, a bitter taste and furred tongue (often mistaken for "Liver"), flatulence, constipation, varicocele, etc.

This list is, however, by no means complete, and is capable of being greatly added to. The symptoms invariably baffle the ordinary doctor, who either says there is nothing the matter with you, or gives you some medicine which may make you feel better for a little while, or may not, but it will not cure you, for drugs rarely cure these nervous diseases, though electricity, which the ordinary doctor doesn't use, will.

It seems a common-sense thing that, if one has used up too much nerve force, seeing that the nerves depend for their activity on electricity, the way to cure them is to supply the overdraft of electricity in doses, in the same way as one would supply the deficiency in one's overdrawn bank account. This can, however, only be done gradually, but it can be done by means of the Richardson Perfected Electro-Galvanic Belt, which gives new tone to the irritated and shattered nervous system, soothing its stress and pain, improving the blood and circulation, and by gradually restoring the lacking elements, builds up the system to its original condition of health, and even makes the strong stronger.

Electrical treatment is recognised the world over by the greatest physicians as the finest tonic they have, for it is Nature's remedy, but the expense of its application, and the difficulty of giving to the patient for any length of time, makes it almost impossible for the ordinary individual to be treated by it. By means of Richardson's Perfected Electro-Galvanic Belt, however, Nature's great remedy is now placed within the means even of slender purses.

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We invite every sufferer to write at once in confidence, mention your most disagreeable symptoms, and then we can recommend the style of belt most suitable for your case. We will supply this Belt on Thirty Days' Free Trial, as we are certain it will cure, and that the wearer, after the month's trial, will then prefer to keep rather than return the Belt. If you are not perfectly satisfied, return it to us; it costs you nothing to try it. The fact that medicines have not cured you proves that a remedy of a totally different character, like electricity, is required.

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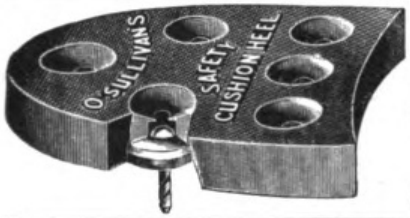
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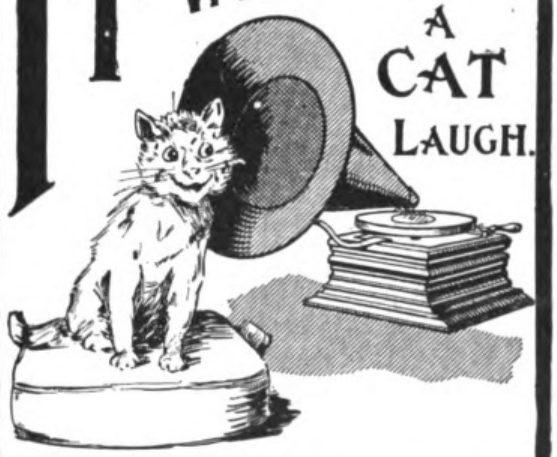
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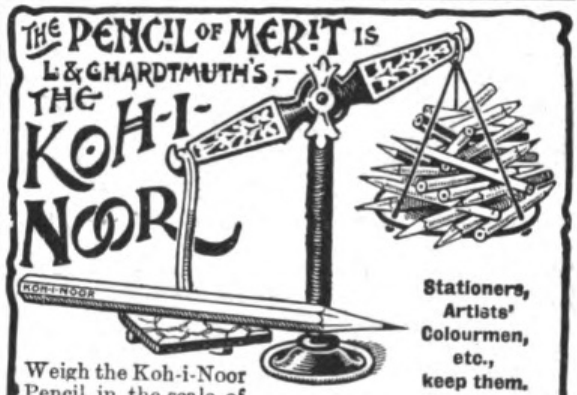
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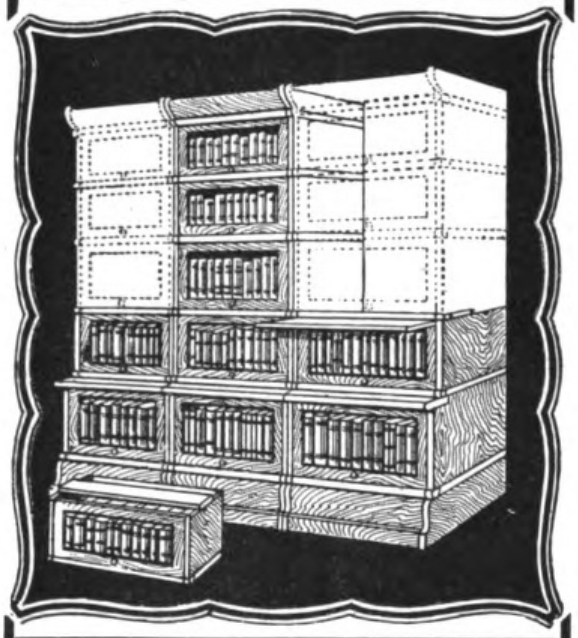
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Will this Page interest You?

The One Certain Cure. It will most certainly interest you if you are inclined to be stout, or if, for any length of time, you have borne a burden of superabundant fat of which nothing you have tried has permanently relieved you. For, indeed, there is only one radical and permanent cure for Corpulency, viz.: the famous "Russell" treatment; and if you are still stout it is a sure proof that you have not tried it. It is the certainty of a permanent return to health, grace, and beauty which has caused the immense success of the treatment discovered by Mr. F. Cecil Russell some twenty years ago.

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Its Tonic Value. The mixture in question is neither aperient nor constipating, but is an excellent tonic which promotes a healthy appetite and stimulates the digestive organs, with the result that, while the decrease of fatty matter is going on steadily, the subject, by taking a larger quantity of wholesome food, is enriching the blood and thus increasing muscular development, nerve and brain vigour, and generally gaining in health, strength, energy, and good spirits. Herein lies the all-important difference between the "Russell" treatment and other methods; the former is a builder-up of muscle, brain, and nerve; the latter are debilitating in every sense.

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Grateful Patients. Stout persons who peruse "Corpulency and the Cure," Mr. Russell's standard work, will be struck by the convincing evidence as to the permanent value of the "Russell" treatment, supplied in writing by hundreds of the author's grateful patients. For obvious reasons Mr. Russell omits the names of his patients, but every original letter is carefully filed for reference at Woburn House as proof of *bona fides*. Medical men, to whom Mr. Russell owes the introduction of many patients, frequently verify for themselves, by reference to the original letters, the extraordinary cures effected by the "Russell" treatment and recorded by patients in "Corpulency and the Cure."

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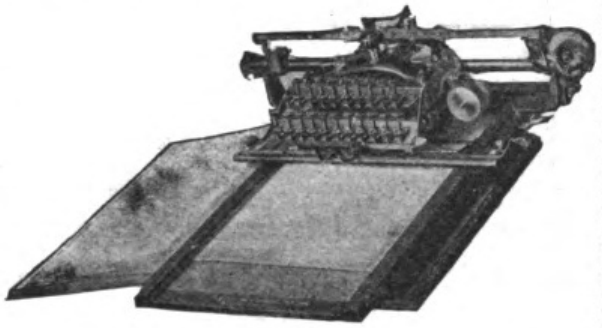
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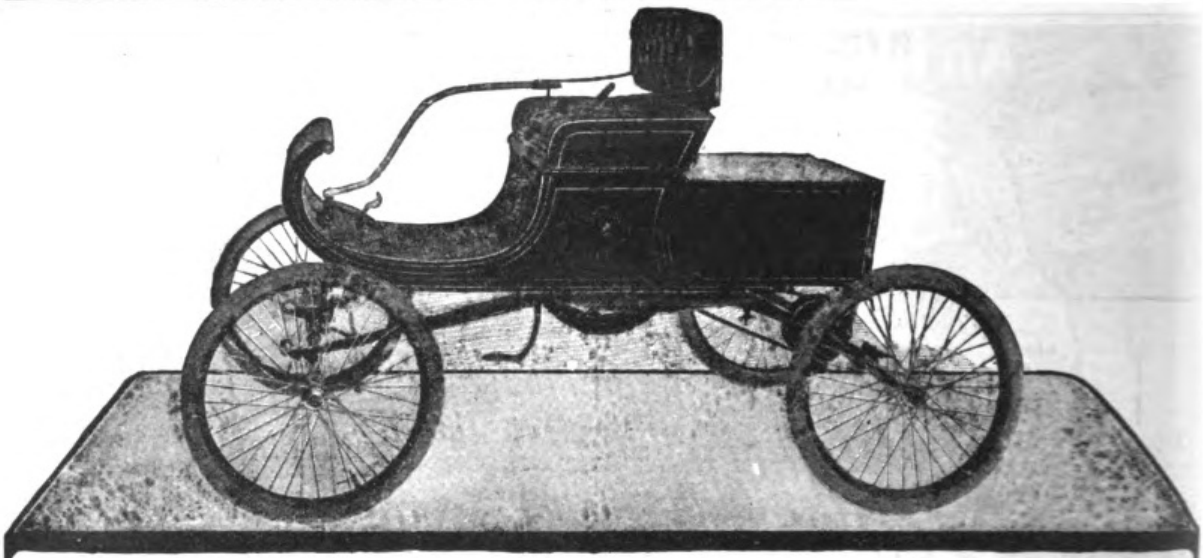


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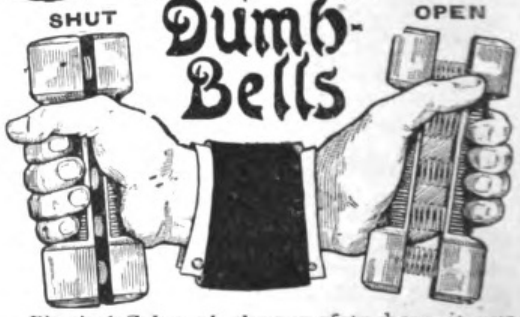
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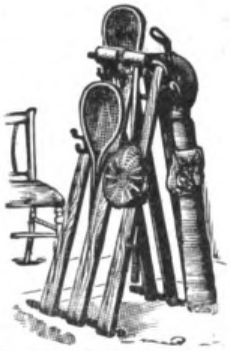


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Is HEAVILY SILVER-PLATED throughout

and the stem or handle has a beautiful original design in bas-relief most artistically engraved. Both the quality of the metal and the style of workmanship are of the highest possible character and excellence, and consumers of porridge would do well to save the Coupons and delight their young friends and children with a **"Gift Spoon"** as a Christmas Present.

YOU MAY GET ONE POST FREE, either

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VENO'S LIGHTNING COUGH CURE stops an ordinary cough in one night. It does not merely smother a cough as the old-fashioned mixtures do, but cuts the phlegm, brings it away easily, clears the air passages, and protects the lungs; the cough then stops naturally. It is a scientific remedy endorsed by Medical Men, vastly superior to ordinary cough mixtures or any of the emulsions. Thousands of sufferers in Great Britain have been cured after having been turned out of hospitals. It has an enormous sale because of its superior virtue in all cases of **Chronic coughs, bronchitis, asthma, catarrh, influenza,** and especially **children's Coughs.** Ask for VENO'S LIGHTNING COUGH CURE, 1/1½ and 2/9, at chemists and medicine vendors everywhere, or post free on receipt of price from **The Veno Drug Co., Hulme, Manchester.** A valuable book on chest diseases with each bottle.

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Walk-Overs are the best made, best fitting, most comfortable, durable, and satisfactory boots that modern machinery and skilled labour can produce.

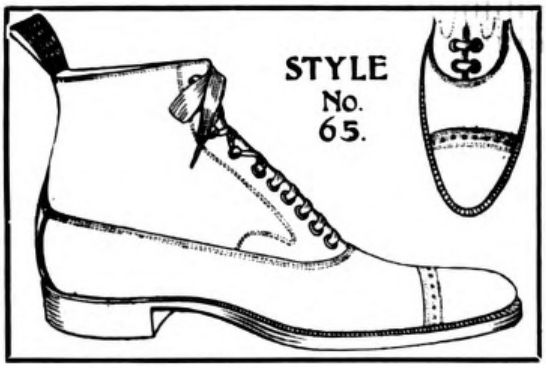
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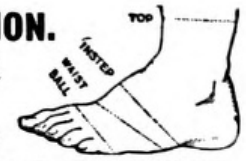


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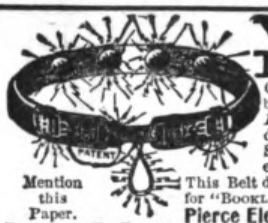
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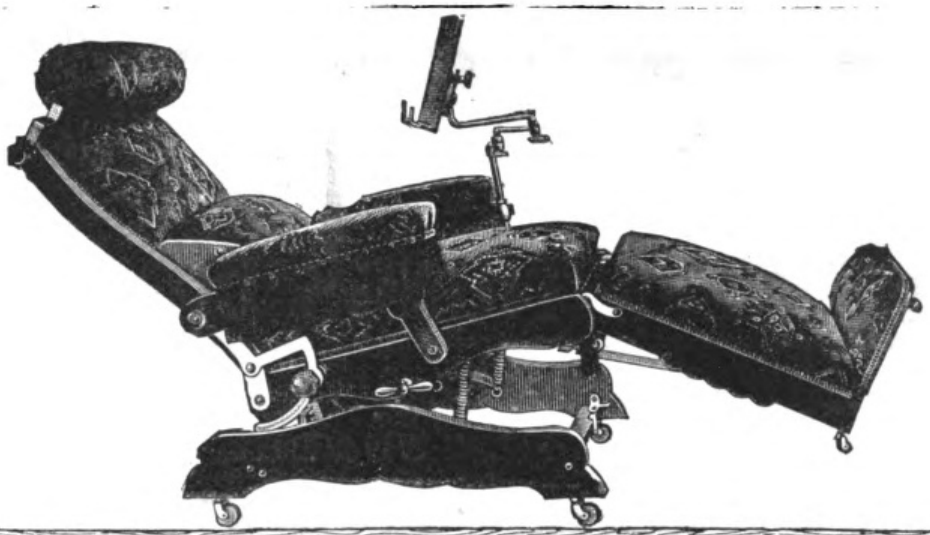
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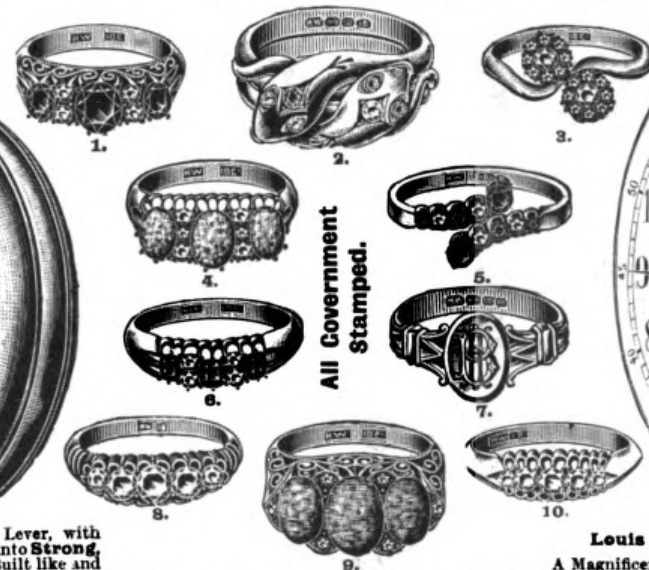
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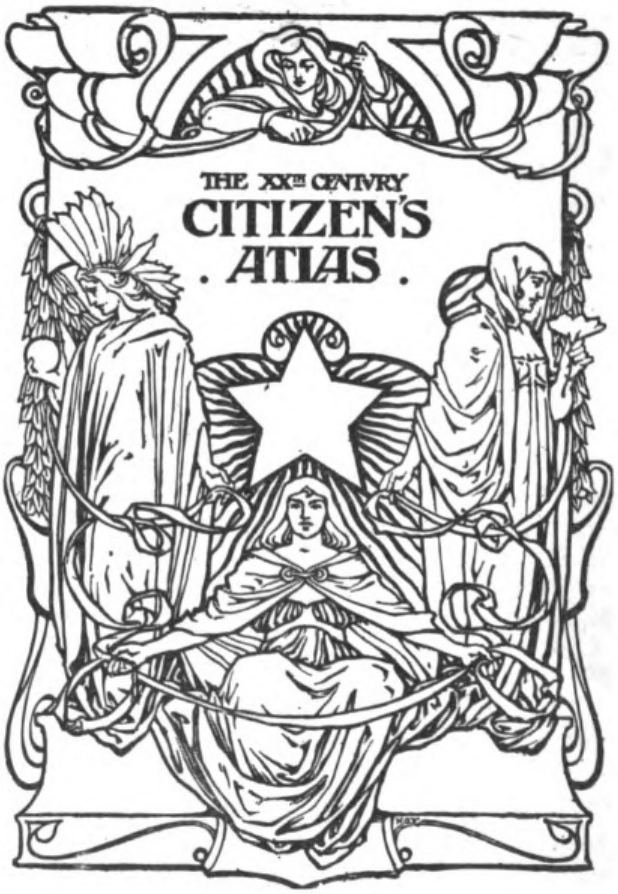
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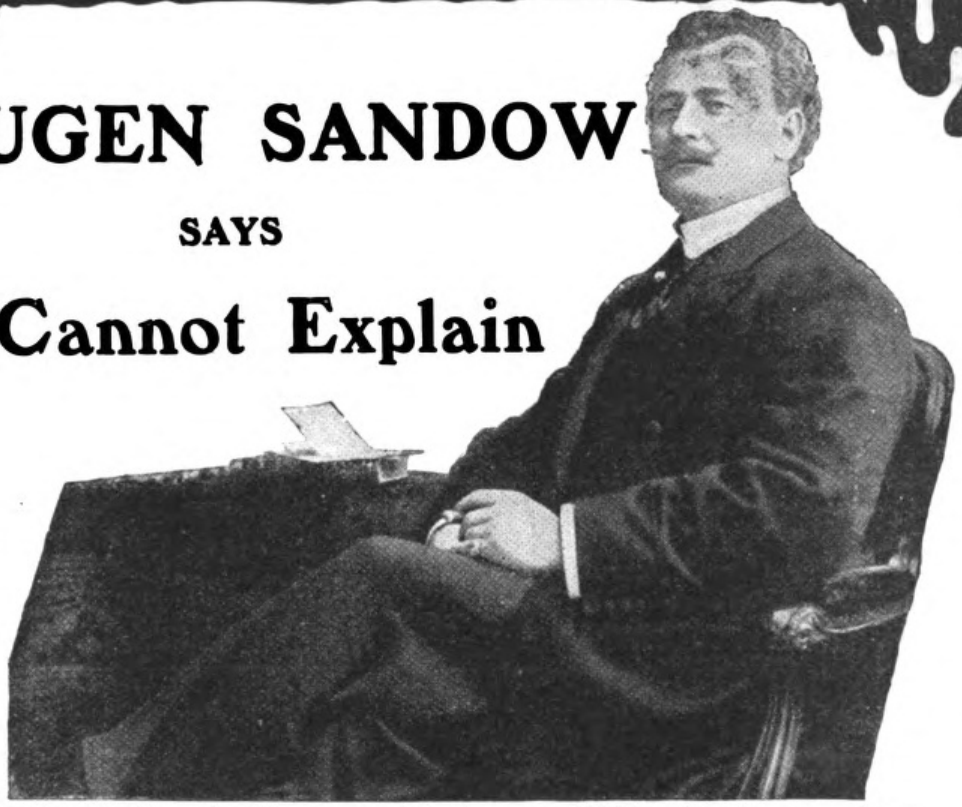
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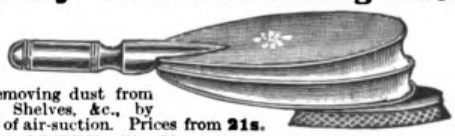
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Similar information to that which proved of such extraordinary value to this fortunate man is contained in a most valuable register published by Messrs. A. W. FOSTER & CO., 19, VULCAN HOUSE, LUDGATE HILL, LONDON, E.C., called "FOSTER'S LIST OF HEIRS," price, post free, 1s. 6d., by Postal Order. Nearly £100,000,000 lies buried in the Court of Chancery awaiting claimants, and 80,000 persons have been advertised for by the Court of Chancery and Trustees to claim this and other money. Yet this fact is known to but few people, hence the vast sums that are not claimed; and Messrs. FOSTER & CO. have collected all this valuable information together into a Register which will undoubtedly be the means of enabling large numbers of people in all parts of the country to claim what rightly belongs to them.

Every page of this book, as it was formerly published, has been carefully revised, and many thousands of new names have been added. In its present enlarged form it contains invaluable information about unclaimed money and estates which cannot be obtained from any other source. New names have been added right up to the present time, and "Foster's New List of Heirs" is now the most complete, correct, and up-to-date book on the subject published.

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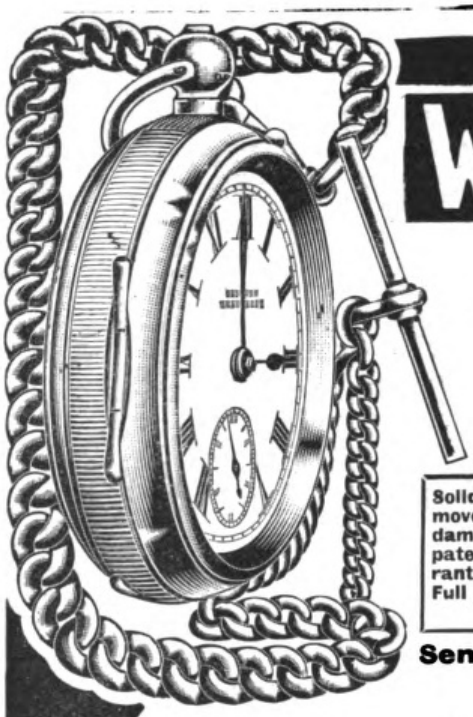
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Can Inebriety be cured? Here are some facts from prominent men regarding the Keeley Cure for the Drink and Drug Habit.

"It really cures. It does what it professes to do." Such is the emphatic testimony of Mr. Eardley Wilmot, the well-known secretary of the Church of England Temperance Society, who for some ten years has had the Keeley method under close observation in this country. He adds: "I do not wish to use high-flown language, but really and truly I look upon the Keeley Cure as a modern miracle." And then he tells how case after case that had been considered hopeless has yielded speedily to the Keeley Cure, the patients returning to their work full of vigour and happy in the restoration of all that makes life worth living.

He has sent bad cases which his society were unable to deal with. These cases numbered in all forty, and Mr. Wilmot says that out of these only four have lapsed, while the remaining thirty-six recovered and have been total abstainers ever since.

Furthermore, Mr. W. Hind Smith, of the National Council of Young Men's Christian Associations, declares that in his opinion, after ten years of constant service on the Investigating Committee of the Keeley Cure, it is the only effective cure for chronic alcoholism and drug addiction of which he is aware.

The principles of it are easily explained. The man or woman upon whom has fallen the disease of intemperance goes to the Keeley Institute as he or she would go to any hospital or nursing home. They go of their own free will, or they are not admitted. If they do not wish to be cured, the administrators of the Institute will have none of them. Even when they consent to come, they are left a free agent to go in and out at will, so long as they are there at stated hours of the day when the treatment is administered.



Leslie E. Keeley M.D. LL.D.

The treatment takes four weeks, and is carried out in England only at the Keeley Institute, at 8 and 9, West Bolton Gardens, London, S.W. It consists of injections of the Curative Solution four times a day, and a tonic which is taken every two hours during the day.

At the beginning of the treatment the patient is provided a liberal amount of the best whisky, if he desires it; or, if the addiction be in the category of drugs, the accustomed dose is allowed, but after two or three days the old craving for alcohol disappears for good and all; for drugs it takes longer.

As a matter of fact, both these conditions are diseases, and have to be treated as such. Dean Farrar has truly said: "Alcohol is one of a number of lethal drugs which have the fatal property of creating for themselves a crave which in many people becomes an appetite; an appetite which strengthens into a vice; a vice which ends in disease; a disease which constitutes a crushing and degrading slavery."

The Keeley treatment here steps in, braces the will, strengthens the physical basis of the patient, and destroys all craving for alcohol.

As has been already observed, the Keeley treatment has been employed in this country for many years under the auspices of a committee of broad-minded men of affairs who have satisfied themselves by personal investigation, not only of the efficacy of the Cure, but of its permanency in nearly every case. During the whole of this period the Chairman of Committee has been the Rev. James Fleming, B.D., Canon of York, Chaplain in Ordinary to His Majesty the King. Canon Fleming keeps in constant touch with the operations of the Keeley Institute, espousing both in public and in private the cause of this practical Cure with all the forceful eloquence which so distinguishes him.

It sounds almost too good to be true, but the years have proved that it is an absolute fact. Scores of thousands of drunkards, all the world over, have been cured by Dr. Keeley's method, and are still being cured, and it has justified its existence by the incontestable fact that an increasing number of patients are received year after year, and are sent away cured.

A discerning British public appreciates hard facts. The published Annual Reports of Canon Fleming's Committee can be had for the asking.

These reports are highly interesting, containing, as they do, authentic information as to the cures effected, whether the trouble had been alcoholism, morphinism, or nervous prostration.

Some of the patients had been victims to the drink or drug habit for very many years. Cures are the rule, and, what is more, they are permanent. Among the patients are physicians, lawyers, clergymen, journalists, and men generally who do the brain work of the world.

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EXPRESSIONS of opinion emanating from specialists have a value far surpassing any general opinion that may be given on a particular invention or work of art. Expert opinion exceeds in its scope and in its character all other opinion, hence the testimonial of the expert has become the guiding influence in appraising the value of the special object to which it applies.

The testimonials to which we shall here refer are not mere abstract expressions of opinion limited in their statements to the average generalities, but are concrete and definite in their endorsement, and beyond this it is impossible for a specialist to express himself. Let us take, for example, a pianist and artist like Paderewski.

Paderewski, in a testimonial dated the 24th of March, 1900, in reference to the Pianola, makes this statement: "It is perfection." He means thereby that nothing can excel it, nothing can exceed it in its scope as an artistic expounder of piano music; and on November 7, 1900, he orders a second one. He states particularly that he wishes it for his own use.

When a great artist like Paderewski states that an instrument is perfection, and when he orders another one for his Switzerland chateau, having one already in his Paris residence, it signifies that to him it has become an artistic necessity.

Paderewski is a specialist on everything that pertains to the piano. The PIANOLA is a division of the piano art, and he necessarily requires it for his artistic collaboration. This in itself is an indication to the public of what enormous value is attached to the PIANOLA as an adjunct to the piano art.

Of what great advantage, then, must the PIANOLA be to all pianists, when to a virtuoso like Paderewski it has this value?



Paderewski
"The Pianola is perfection."

Hofmann
"The Pianola is the best of all piano-playing devices."



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Rosenthal

"Nothing has more closely approached hand-playing."

Sauer

"The Pianola gives me more pleasure than thousands of so-called pianistic efforts to which I have listened."



Josef Hofmann is known, not only as a great student of music and the piano art, but also as a most remarkable and gifted pianist. This expert says: "I unhesitatingly pronounce it the best of all piano-playing devices."

Hofmann has investigated all piano-playing devices, not only from the musical and artistic point of view, but also from the methods and appliances utilised for the purpose of bringing about these results, and without hesitation he pronounces the PIANOLA the best. His is a testimonial that has analytical forces applied to it and the experience of investigation behind it.

Among the most intellectual and even scientific players of the present day, a man of great force of mind and a ceaseless student of the arts and sciences, is Moriz Rosenthal. Moriz Rosenthal, referring to the PIANOLA, says: "Nothing has more closely approached hand-playing.'

The particular relation of the hand to the piano-keyboard and its most refined and subtle association with the piano have been subjects to which he has given the deepest thought. He has investigated the construction of pianos, and knows the anatomy of the hand and arm and the psychical relation between the operations of the fingers and hand and the action of the human mind.

Another great artist, Emil Sauer, the head of the Vienna Conservatory of Music, and the special head of its piano department, says: "The PIANOLA gives me more pleasure than I have had from thousands of so-called treats of pianistic effort."

This expert tells us that he, who certainly has been accustomed during his life to listening to the most advanced piano performances, derives more pleasure from the PIANOLA than from thousands of human piano-players. He gives it a position of competition with refined pianists, men and women who have played for him. This expert testimonial is again, therefore, far beyond the nature of the average testimonial.

Among those men in Europe who are considered poetic musicians—that is to say, musicians who are not merely great pianists, but composers and men of particularly *subtle and delicate* gifts—is Maurice Moszkowski.

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Moszkowski

"Anyone hidden in a room who will hear the Pianola for the first time, will surely think that it is a great virtuoso that plays."

Moszkowski's opinion has a powerful weight, and he says that anyone hidden in a room not knowing who is playing, "who will hear the PIANOLA for the first time, will surely think that it is a great virtuoso that plays."

Here is direct testimony on the effect of the Pianola's playing upon a musical artist of the highest culture, a man who has made piano-playing a subject of profound investigation, who has written many standard works and compositions for the piano, and who possesses an original piano talent of a high order. This expert opinion is of such immense value that it can hardly be overestimated.

This article treats of the expert specialist and confines itself to the opinions of those who have made a special study of the piano, with the result of making them authorities upon the instrument and upon piano-playing. In the wider field, among musicians in general, the PIANOLA has met with equally universal appreciation. It is endorsed by almost every musician of note.

All testimonials have their intrinsic value, but rarely has there been such remarkable unanimity of opinion so definitely and unequivocally expressed as is found in this set of testimonials from the foremost specialists and experts in artistic and æsthetic piano-playing, all of whom, without reservation, attribute to the PIANOLA qualities which place that instrument in a position that very nearly assumes a character competitive to themselves. There have been many testimonials published on many other important inventions and on many artistic products; there has been considerable unanimity on many of these subjects, but never before has there been such transcendental testimonials issued on the part of rival experts as the above testimonials centred on the PIANOLA.

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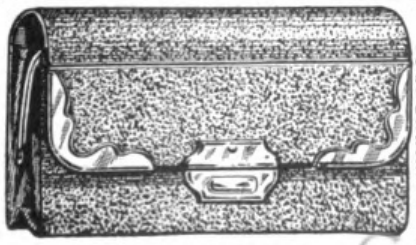
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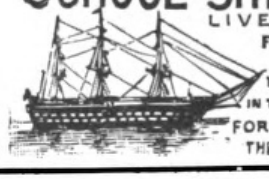
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NOW! IS THE WATCHWORD OF THE WISE!!

NOW! IS THE CONSTANT SWING OF THE PENDULUM OF TIME!

You can change the course of the trickling stream, but not the rolling river. It will defy all your tiny efforts.

The Pilot can so steer and direct as to bring the ship into safety, but he cannot quell the raging storm.

The common idea when not feeling well is 'I will wait and see,—perhaps I shall feel better to-morrow;' whereas had a supply of ENO'S 'FRUIT SALT' been at hand, and use made of it at the onset, all calamitous results might have been avoided.

Every Household and Travelling Trunk ought to contain a Bottle of

ENO'S 'FRUIT SALT.'



It allays Nervous Excitement, Sleeplessness, Depression, and restores the Nervous System to its proper condition. It is Pleasant, Cooling, Health-giving, Refreshing, and Invigorating. You cannot overstate its great value in keeping the Blood Pure and free from Disease. It should be in every bedroom and traveller's bag (for any emergency). It acts as simply, yet just as powerfully, on the animal system, as sunshine does on the vegetable world, and removes all fœtid or poisonous matter (the groundwork of disease) from the Blood by Natural Means. Always does good—never any harm.

It is not too much to say the merits of ENO'S 'FRUIT SALT' have been published, tested, and approved literally from Pole to Pole, and that its cosmopolitan popularity to-day presents one of the most signal illustrations of commercial enterprise to be found in our trade records.

I HAVE served for more than a quarter of a century with my regiment in the West Indies and on the West Coast of Africa, and have constantly used ENO'S 'FRUIT SALT.' I have always found it of the utmost use, especially during the Ashantee War, under Sir Garnet Wolseley. I have been through several epidemics of Yellow Fever during my military career, but have never had an attack. This I attribute to the use of 'FRUIT SALT,' which I strongly recommend, more especially to those living or travelling in tropical countries."—(Signed)———, Captain, Retired Pay, West Indian Regiment, Spanish Town, Jamaica, 9th April, 1900.

There is no doubt that where Eno's 'Fruit Salt' has been taken in the earliest stages of a disease, it has in innumerable instances prevented a serious illness. Its effect on a Disordered or Feverish Condition is simply Marvellous.

It is, in fact, Nature's Own Remedy, and an Unsurpassed One.

CAUTION.—Examine the bottle and Capsule and see that they are marked ENO'S 'FRUIT SALT,' otherwise you have been imposed upon by a WORTHLESS imitation.

Prepared only by J. C. ENO, Ltd., 'FRUIT SALT' WORKS, London, S.E., by J. C. ENO'S Patent.

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BORD'S PIANOS 25 per cent. Discount for Cash or 14s. 6d. per month (second-hand,



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NOW! IS THE WATCHWORD OF THE WISE!!!

WON BACK TO HEALTH.

Indigestion and Constipation banished.

A LONDON MOTHER'S GRATEFUL TESTIMONY.

HAPPY the home that is woman's delight, the busy husband's haven of refuge, the children's paradise! But how many homes are darkened by the cloud of disease? They exist in every city, town, and village, and are countless in number. As health is essential to happiness in the home it should be sought after, preserved, and treasured before anything else of this world.

Never, perhaps, in the history of the world's greatest city, has recovered health been the cause of so much **genuine happiness** as in the home of Mrs. Julia Mary Bing, of Nelson Villas, Church Road, Heston, Middlesex.



"My Son said: 'You shall try them.'"

Heston, which lies midway between Southall and Hounslow, is greatly interested in the occurrence.

Mrs. Bing, a typical British mother, told her remarkable story to a *Sun* representative. She spoke plainly, but with all the enthusiasm of a grateful heart: "I am only too grateful to be able to give you details," said Mrs. Bing. "I had been **a martyr to excruciating pains for twenty years,** and after spending pounds upon pounds in doctor's fees, medicines, and so on, without getting better—but growing worse—I was at last cured by taking Bile Beans for Biliousness. It happened this way.

Throughout those twenty years, I was so afflicted with swimming in the head, accompanied by racking pains in the head and face, a stifling sensation in the chest, exhausting aching between the shoulders, and severe vomiting, that a week never passed without I had to **cease** my household **work** and go to bed.

A comfortable sleep was something I had not known for years—I had much pain and was very restless. As a girl I suffered from sick headache, and when I was about twenty-four years of age, chronic biliousness and indigestion came on with great severity. I was then living in London, and several doctors attended me, but without doing me any good. Nor did I derive any benefit from attending a London Hospital for women. I was **dreadfully constipated**

The doctors specially prescribed to cure me of this, but the relief was only temporary, and the indigestion and vomiting, which made me dread taking food, never abated.

To attempt to do any washing, or anything which necessitated stretching my arms out, or stooping, was sure to bring the pains darting through my head, generally most severe on the right side. Vomiting followed these shooting pains every time. This went on until January last.

I remember that on January 19th, I had the **worst bilious attack** I ever had **in my life.**"

My son said: "Why don't you try Bile Beans?"

I replied, "I don't believe they can be as good as the reports say."

"You shall try them, anyhow," said he, and he went to Hounslow and bought a box, and made me take them.

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BORD'S PIANOS 25 per cent. Discount for Cash or 14s. 6d. per month (second-hand,

"I have not had a single attack of biliousness from that day. The first effect of them was that they cleared my head. They then seemed to purify my whole system, and **drove the pain away** altogether. They enabled me to sleep soundly, and gave me a good appetite, and a strong digestion.

I have eaten well since I got through the first box, and now know what it is to enjoy being hungry. They also completely cured me of constipation, the only medicine that ever gave me permanent relief in that way. In fact, **I feel quite well again,** and **my health is excellent. Bile Beans have cured me,** and I never cease to recommend them, or explain what caused the change in me."

This is striking testimony to the remarkable efficacy of the greatest specific of a scientific age.

A WORD TO WOMEN.

Many women suffer greatly from "that tired feeling," lack of energy, debility, constipation, and other minor ailments. These ills are brought about in many cases through want of sufficient exercise, consequent upon the many calls of household duties. The result is that eventually a state is reached when work becomes almost an impossibility, the blood becomes impure, the liver sluggish, causing impaired sleep and digestion and a sallow complexion. Women who suffer from any of these ailments would be wise to take without delay a course of Bile Beans, for when winter comes it will find out the weak spots. They are ailments that are lamentably common among women-folk, and they are highly dangerous if neglected. To pass comfortably and successfully through the approaching winter the body will want putting in a thorough state of repair. Bile Beans will do this for you. They clear the system, strengthen the nerves, and correct, not temporarily, but permanently, the digestive organs. Bile Beans, being purely vegetable, contain nothing of an injurious nature, and can be taken with equal safety by either child or adult.

PALE GIRLS.

One of the most serious drawbacks to a pretty face, is a pallid, bloodless complexion. Pale faces, pale lips, pale gums; these are all indications of the presence of anæmia. The system which lacks blood is open to attacks from many insidious diseases. Bile Beans strengthen the digestive system so that it turns the food into the purest blood, and tones up the liver to enable it to keep free from bile and other impure secretions. This is the only way to cure an anæmic condition.

SICK HEADACHE.

Sick Headache is usually one of the symptoms of biliousness, constipation, or other derangement of the digestive organs. It is accompanied by nausea, from which it derives its name, and is generally more violent in the front part of the head. The appetite is impaired, and there is a bad taste in the mouth. In the treatment of this ailment, in the first place, the bowels should be opened, but only in a mild and gentle way, the diet attended to, and healthy exercise indulged in as much as possible. A course of BILE BEANS will be found a certain cure.

BILIOUSNESS and DIZZINESS.

Mrs. Leaf, 10, Woollett Street, East India Docks Road, London, E., speaking to a "Weekly Budget" reporter, said:



"Two years ago I began to suffer with attacks of biliousness and dizziness, particularly in the morning. Everything would appear to swim round and round, and sometimes on getting up of a morning, this swimming sensation would have such a bewildering effect that I would have to take hold of something to prevent me from falling down. My sight was blurred, and everything I looked at appeared to be spotted or partly blotted out. These attacks became more and more frequent, and I consulted a doctor. He gave me some medicine, which, however, did me no good at all. By this time I was so bad that I was really afraid to be left alone. I was a sufferer from indigestion, and my food lay like a stone on my stomach I seemed to get no nourishment out of it, and day by day I grew weaker. After this I tried various things, but nothing did me any good, until about four months ago, when I chanced to see an advertisement of Charles Forde's Bile Beans for Biliousness, and decided to try them. After a few doses I began to feel better, and in a remarkably short time the dizziness entirely left me, and I could eat and enjoy my food with no fear of after effects. I have never had an attack of dizziness or indigestion since, and am now as well as ever I was in my life. I tell everybody that Charles Forde's Bile Beans for Biliousness have cured me, and that if they have indigestion it is their own fault." "Yes," interrupted Mr. Leaf, "and you may say that they cured me too. I used to suffer terribly from biliousness, but the Bile Beans soon put me right. I am now entirely free from the complaint."

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NOW! IS THE WATCHWORD OF THE WISE!!!

TO PREVENT INFLUENZA.

Influenza only seizes upon those whose systems have become run down and weakened. Those who keep in the pink of condition snap their fingers at this winter scourge. Liver chill, colds, attacks of shivering, and similar ailments, have one common origin, namely, the condition of the body. When the supply of energy is adequate, the pulse vigorous, the digestion good, colds and chills cannot get a hold. Once the vitality becomes lessened the evils just named creep in. Chas. Forde's BILE BEANS will keep the body in the "pink of condition." They act directly upon the liver and end that cause of so many ailments—constipation. They stimulate the circulation, improve the digestion, and increase the energy of the whole system. Women especially find them beneficial. Always remember that prevention of influenza, and its allied ailments, is better than cure, and that experience shows no preventive known equal to BILE BEANS.

BILE BEANS cure headache, constipation, piles, liver chill, indigestion, flatulence, spasms, colds, influenza, dizziness, anæmia, debility, blood impurities, sleeplessness, female complaints, and a host of other ailments that owe their origin to defective bile flow, assimilation, and digestion.

Of all chemists, or post free if this Magazine is mentioned, from the Bile Bean Manufacturing Co., 119 & 120, London Wall, London, E.C., on receipt of prices, 1/1½ or 2/9. (Large box contains three times small size.)

SAMPLE BOX FREE.

SAMPLE COUPON.

The Proprietors will gladly send a ***SAMPLE BOX FREE*** to anyone writing for same. The only conditions are that you fill in this coupon, and forward it with 1d. stamp to cover postage, to the Bile Bean Mfg. Co's. Central Distributing Depôt, Greek Street, Leeds, England.

Write name of Magazine here.

.....

Bile Beans FOR Biliousness

Zam-Buk OINTMENT

Charles Forde's Great Herbal Remedy for piles, running sores, cuts, burns, bruises, eczema, etc., 1/1½ per box. Free sample box from the Proprietors, The Bile Bean Manufacturing Co., Greek Street, Leeds, if 1d. stamp is sent to cover return postage.

"Zam-Buk"—Piles Cured.

BISTOCK FARM, DODDINGTON, NR. SITTINGBOURNE, KENT.

To the Bile Bean Mfg. Co.

SIRS,

I am glad to say the result of using "Zam-Buk" Ointment has been most satisfactory. The Piles (for which I used it with Bile Beans) have quite disappeared, and I strongly recommend it to all sufferers.

You are at liberty to publish this in any form you please

(Signed) Mrs. E. CARPENTER.

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25 per cent. Discount for Cash or 14s. 6d. per month (second-hand, 10s. 6d. per month) on the Three Years' System. — Lists free of C. STILES & CO., 74 and 76, Southampton Row, London, W.C. (removed from 40 and 42, Southampton Row). PIANOS EXCHANGED.

BECHSTEIN PIANOS

These magnificent Pianos for Hire on the Three Years' System, at advantageous prices and terms.—Lists and particulars free of CHAS. STILES & CO., 74 and 76, Southampton Row, London, W.C. (removed from 40 and 42, Southampton Row).

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And 164, 166 & 170, RECENT ST., LONDON, W.

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LINEN COLLARS, CUFFS, & SHIRTS.

Collars. LADIES' 3-fold from **3/6** doz. GENTS' 4-fold **4/11** per doz.
Cuffs for Ladies or Gentlemen from **5/11** per dozen.

PRICE LISTS POST FREE. Write for Samples of Damasks, &c.

Matchless Shirts. Fine quality Long Cloth, with 4-fold Pure Linen Fronts, **35/6** per ½-doz. (to measure 2/- extra).

Manufacturers to His Gracious Majesty the King.

N.B.—To prevent delay, all Letter-Orders and Inquiries for Samples should be sent direct to Belfast.

To the Proprietors of . .

WRIGHT'S Coal Tar Soap

HOME FOR ORPHAN BOYS, HERNE BAY.

Vice-Presidents: Rev. R. F. Horton, D.D., and Rev. F. B. Meyer, B.A., London. Hon. Surgeon: C. K. Bowes, Esq., M.D. Hon. Dentist: R. H. Moore, Esq., L.D.S. Hon. Sec.: Rev. C. Pockney. Founder and Hon. Director: Mr. H. W. Squirrell.

We are using your Coal Tar Soap in our Home and think very highly of it. Although our boys attend the public school we are kept free from infectious disease, we believe by the use of antiseptic soap.

(SIGNED) *H. W. SQUIRRELL.*

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